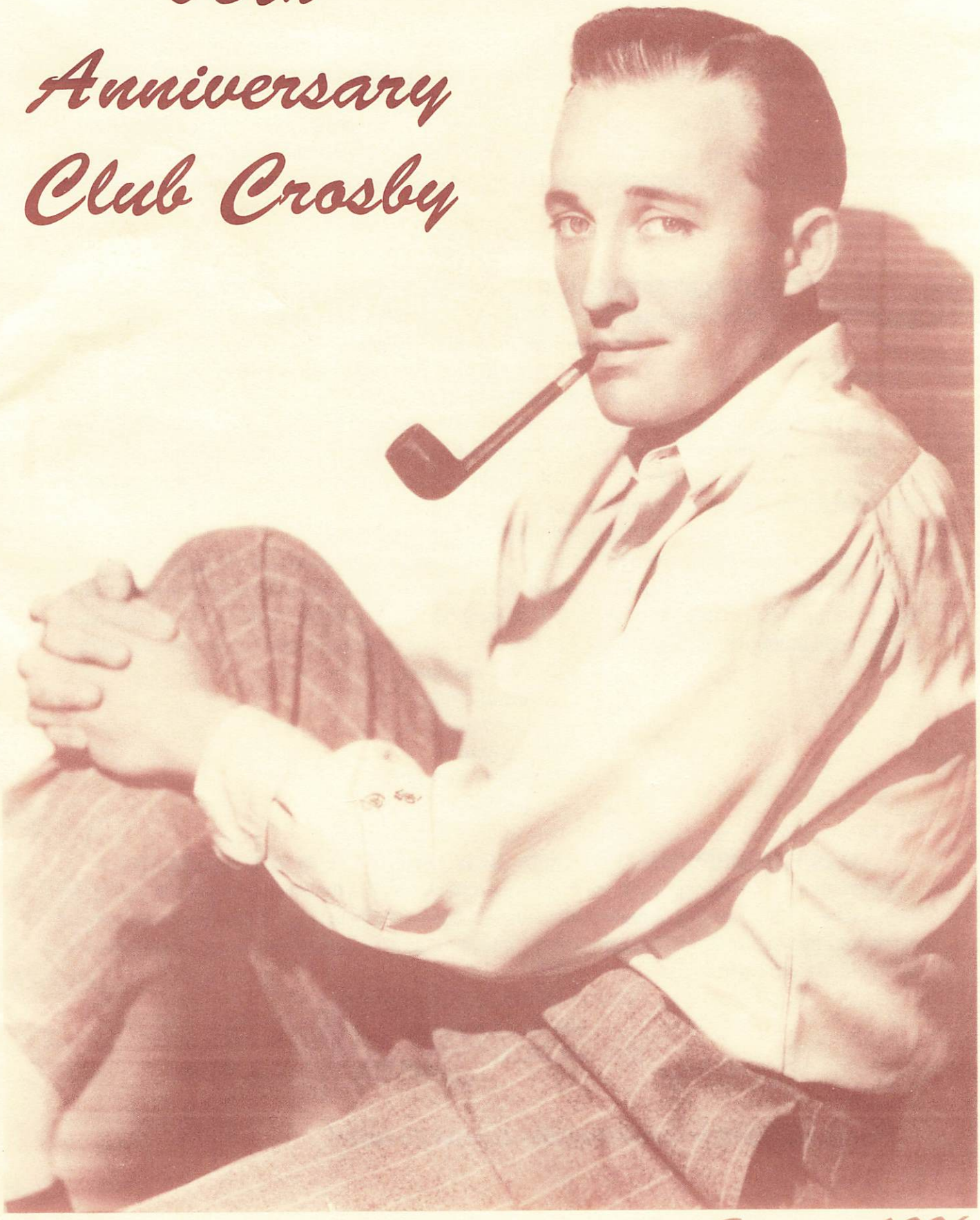
60th Anniversary Club Crosby



Bingang

Summer 1996

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Most of you have paid your dues for 1996, but some have not. On your mailing label, directly above your name, is the date your membership expires. We would appreciate payment as soon as possible after that date.

If the club is to remain financially stable, it is necessary that all members pay dues on a regular basis. We would not like to drop any members for non-payment, but it may become necessary to do so. If any of you are no longer interested in receiving *Bingang,* please drop us a note or postcard or letter.

Please follow these instructions for payment of dues:

TO OUR MEMBERS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Send a check or money order for $11.00, made out to Club Crosby, to:

Wayne Martin, Editor, *Bingang*
435 So. Holmes Ave.
Kirkwood, MO 63122-6311

U. S. postage stamps in denominations of no more than $1.00 are also acceptable for payment.

Canadian members must pay in U. S. dollars by means of a postoffice money order or an international bank draft drawn on a U. S. bank. Canadian currency and personal checks on Canadian banks are not acceptable to our bank.

TO OUR MEMBERS IN EUROPE

Ken Crossland of W. Midlands, England, is our European representative. He collects dues and does the mailing of *Bingang* for Europe and the British Isles. Magazines are air-mailed to Ken in bulk from the U.S. He distributes them to the members. Dues are $16.00 and must be submitted to Ken in an amount equivalent to $16.00 U.S. Send dues or notice of non-receipt of *Bingang* to:

Ken W. Crossland
9 Arden Drive
Dorridge
Solihull
W. Midlands B93 8LP
England

Checks or money orders should be made out to K. W. Crossland.

TO OUR MEMBERS IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTH AMERICA

We cannot accept foreign currency or personal checks, as it is too difficult and expensive to get them cashed. Money orders or bank drafts must specify payment in U. S. dollars. Personal checks will be returned, unhonored. Dues are $16.00, and journals are sent airmail. Send your remittance, made out to Club Crosby, to:

Wayne Martin, Editor, *Bingang*
435 So. Holmes Ave.
Kirkwood, MO 63122-6311 U.S.A.

The picture on the front cover is from Mark Scrimger's collection.

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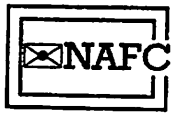

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Our 60th Anniversary!

Readers Write

Dear Wayne:

Your letter to Perry Como, with *Bingang,* Winter 1995-96, has been received.

As Mr. C has been a little under the weather lately, I am holding it here for the present as I don't want this most interesting issue to get mislaid at Perry's home. It gave me the time to read your magazine and I have thoroughly enjoyed doing so. You and Mark Scrimger do a great job, and I learned a lot about Bing Crosby, plus others.

I think you already know how Perry feels about Bing, as he has said so often how he started out trying to sing like Bing—almost everyone did in those early days, I think—and so he feels that he owes Bing so much. Perry traveled around the country with concert tours and he had a segment of his show which was dedicated to Bing.

—VERA HAMILTON, Secretary to Mr. Como.

Editor's Note: Perry's Como's response to our letter, an inscribed photograph, is printed in this issue.

Dear Wayne,

My acquaintance with Bing goes back to Germany in the late 1940s. This refugee from East Prussia in his late teens, awaiting emigration to the U.S. in Hameln, British Zone, met people from the rest of the world at last. Aiming to apply my school English and learn about life in the U.S., I joined the newly formed Anglo-German Youth Club at the YMCA troop recreation center. This enabled me to be invited to movies that were off limits to other Germans. Bing, in his famous roles as a priest, "easily" confirmed my choice of a new home country.

I began modestly collecting Bing's incomparable music in the 50s, mostly off radio and TV. In 1978 I made a pilgrimage to Spokane, Bing's Gonzaga library and Crosbyana room, talked to an old Jesuit teacher of his and discovered Club Crosby. Two afternoons went by quickly with research. The obituary issue of *Bingang* was quite a tome for the Xerox machine. . .By now I own 2187 musical numbers in 111 albums, plus 55 videos with Bing, which I enjoy frequently.

To me, Bing Crosby is truly "the last word" in popular entertainment. It is only fitting to keep his art and memory alive, as a valuable contribution to our developing American culture.

—DIETER B. PRESSLER, Anacortes, WA.

Dear Wayne,

Thanks for your wonderful tribute to Bob Lundberg. His passing left a gaping hole in our Crosby lives. Bob worked tirelessly for the *BingThings'* members. He was terrific to work with and had a special way of making a relative Bing novice, like myself, feel welcomed and appreciated. My life is richer having had Bob as a friend.

—JOE GROOM, Columbus, OH.

Dear Wayne,

I was sad to read an article sent to me from America that said dear old Bob Hope was fading fast health-wise. It quoted him as saying not to cry, he was looking forward to playing golf again with Bing. I suppose it had to happen sooner or later—after all, he is nearly 93, but somehow Bob always appeared so robust we just assumed he would go on forever. However, as with George Burns, time eventually catches up. I'd like to think that when Bob Hope's time does come, Bing will be there to greet him with a set of golf clubs, saying, "What kept you?"

Seems to be a steady supply of Bing CDs being released, mainly it appears in the U.K. Although I notice the latest MCA release *Top of the Morning,* Bing's Irish songs, it seems that with so many as yet unreleased-on-CD tracks to choose from, there should be much more to look forward to from MCA. If no one there has the necessary "Bing" knowledge, it's a pity they don't consult some of the Club Crosby hierarchy in regard to track selection for their CD releases.

To me, Bing remains the one who started it all (pop music) and the industry's most beautiful "Voice of the Century," with all due respects to Frank and all the others. As the late Sammy Davis, Jr. once said, "First there's Bing, then there's all the other singers."

—GIRVAN PATERSON, Victoria, Australia.

Dear Wayne,

I have quite a bit of correspondence from Bing over the years. I wrote an article on our first meeting for *American Classic Screen* magazine a few years back that could be reproduced. Bing really took me under his wing and encouraged me to become a priest.

—FR. ROBERT MURPHY, St. Joseph, MO.

Editor's Note: Father Murphy's article appears in this issue of *Bingang.*

Thank You!

The following members contributed extra money to help defray the costs of the special anniversary issues: Wallace Anthony, Charles Baillie, Earl Q. Bond, Sr., Milton Cummings, Howard Daniel, William Delucchi, Virgil Edwards, Samuel Fleshman, William Fowler, Harry Fulmer, Herbert Heki, Richard Hoffman, Conrad Kaminski, John Kirby, Priscilla Koernig, Marcie Kukla, Don Lindert, Ken MacGregor, Dolores Mayo, Catherine O'Neill, Joe Onorato, James D. Owen, Girvan Paterson, Dieter Pressler, Kevin Sheather, Ernest Sutkowski, Vernon Wesley Taylor, Helen Tolton, Greg Van Beek, and Frontis B. Wiggins, Jr.

Any donations received after June 1 will be noted in the Winter edition of this newsletter.

We are deeply grateful to all of you. We would gladly accept further contributions for this purpose.

—MARK AND WAYNE

The Editor's Page

WE ARE SIXTY! In the movie *On Golden Pond,* Dabney Coleman asks Henry Fonda, "How does it feel to be 80?" Henry answers, "Twice as bad as forty!" Let's rewrite that for Club Crosby: "How does it feel to be 60?" The answer is "Twice as good as 30!"

We have had a remarkable sixty years, having weathered wars, musical revolutions, changes in public taste, and the indifference and apathy prevalent in much of society. Club Crosby is still here, and we hope to be around for another 60 years!

Some of our members are approaching their golden anniversaries with the club. Maria Ermacora, Shirley Naylor, and Helen Tolton have been members of the club for nearly fifty years. Perhaps there are others. If so, we would like to know about it. Next time you send in your dues, why don't you put in a note telling us how long you have been a member? All of us would be interested.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could all get together and share a glass of champagne (or grape juice or water) to celebrate this auspicious occasion? We can't, but let's all holler "Cheers!" anyway.

NEW OFFICERS. In accordance with what we told you in the last issue, we are happy to announce some additions to our club officers. We have four new contributing editors: Charles Baillie, Pete Cakanic, David Lobosco and Greg Van Beek.

Charlie will edit the "New Releases" section of our newsletter, as he did for the BingThings Society. It has been retitled "BingSings," as it was called in *BingTalks.* Please send all info on CDs and other Bing items directly to him at 118 W. Las Flores Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007.

Pete, David and Greg will continue to supply articles (their choice of subjects) for us, as they have done in the past. All four will serve as advisors to the president and editor, should the need arise.

Still in the works is an associate editor, to assist with editing and eventually take over your present editor's job. We definitely have someone in mind, and he has expressed an interest in doing this task. Stay tuned for more details.

BING ON THE INTERNET. Member Steven Lewis has given us a wonderful birthday present. His Bing Crosby web pages are up and awaiting visitors. He has included a lot of info about Bing's career, and many photos and audio files. For those who do not have home Internet access, many libraries offer access to their patrons. See the announcement on page 36 of this issue.

Also check out the info on Gonzaga U's Internet Home Page on page 42 of the current issue.

DID YOU KNOW THAT. . .Mark Scrimger appeared on cable-access television in Battle Creek and discussed Bing and the Rhythm Boys? The show is called "Phil's Junk Shop." We have seen a tape and can say that Mark did an excellent job of discussing the Boys and illustrating his points with materials from his Crosby collection. He has been invited to do more shows about Bing.

FOUR COLORS SCRATCHED. We had planned to have a full-color cover for this issue, but we found out that it would cost over $1000 to do it. That's more than it costs to print the entire magazine. We couldn't afford it! We'll try to make it up to you with an expanded issue this winter.

BINGTALKS MISSED. We are sorry to say that at the time of this writing, no one had been found who could take over the publication of Bob Lundberg's *BingTalks* and run the BingThings Society. Let's hope someone will still come forward! We were also sorry to hear that Hobie Wilson of the Bing's Friends and Collectors Society has been quite ill. Hope you're better, Hobie!

THE CELEBRATION WILL CONTINUE. We received so much really good material for the Anniversary Edition that we decided to carry our celebration over to the Winter issue. We already have a beautiful cover picture drawn by Jon Oye. Other good articles have been received, and more are coming in. We will print everything that we couldn't get into this edition. See you next issue!

To Priscilla

On The Road With Memories Of Bing

By Priscilla J. Koernig

I would like to contribute to this great celebration—the 60th anniversary of Club Crosby. I think the best way to start is from the beginning of my memories and involvement in Club Crosby, the dedication, adoration and labor of love we had for Bing, plus the concern and appreciation that Bing showed for his fan club and those keeping it active, and for his many fans.

This, in short, is going to be not only history for the club archives, but precious memories I have of all the good friends I've met and known because of Club Crosby (mainly Rena Albanesi and Pat Sullivan). I will try to tell my story in the order that it happened.

First of all, I have idolized Bing ever since I can remember. When I was about nine years old, I'd request Bing's records as presents at Christmas and birthdays. I started making scrapbooks of Bing and spent my allowance on movie magazines that contained pictures and articles on Bing. My mother used to tease me, telling me she thought she listened to Bing on the radio too much when she was expecting me!

I wrote letters to Bing often from about 1947 to 1977. He always sent me pictures and answered every letter and even sent thank you notes for birthday cards, etc. The letters from him first started out "Dear Miss Koernig," but very soon after the first few he wrote "Dear Priscilla." And there are quite a few very personal letters he wrote to me about the family, about the fall in Pasadena, etc. I have one cherished 8 x 10 photograph sent from him that he signed "To My Good Friend, Priscilla—Bing Crosby" and the last autographed photograph of him and his family sent a few days before he passed away signed "To Priscilla, the very best, Bing."

When I first learned about Club Crosby, I joined in 1950.

I saw Bing for the first time at my alma mater, San Mateo High School, on October 7, 1948. He was filming *Riding High* at Tanforan Race Track in San Bruno (approximately seven miles north of San Mateo towards San Francisco). In those days the population was much smaller, and there were fewer schools. Bellarmine High School (in San Jose) used to play football games with San Mateo (among other peninsula high schools) for the year's championship. There was a rumor around campus that Bing was coming to watch the game, since Gary was on Bellarmine's team. (Gary was born the same year I was.) This rumor became a reality when I sat directly behind Bing in the bleachers. He was so nice, and I just couldn't get over being so lucky to see my idol in person! No one was more popular than Bing Crosby! Fortunately, the school photographer took a picture of us kids

Bing at San Mateo High School, October 1948. The arrow points out Priscilla.

with Bing for our school paper. (Little did I know then that in later years I would be fortunate to see him numerous times, take numerous movies and pictures of him and with him, and have him call me by name.) Anyway, I came home that evening after the game, and my mom and dad teased me because I was so excited I couldn't eat dinner.

The next time I saw Bing was in 1950 when he taped a Philco radio show in San Francisco. Wow! To hear him actually sing in person for the first time!

I met Pat Sullivan through the Club Crosby pen pal page in 1952. She and I corresponded regularly and met in San Francisco when she came from Milwaukee to California for a visit in 1953. We spent vacations and time together through the years, and she's become one of my dearest friends, actually just like a sister to me.

Pat Sullivan, Bing and Priscilla, 1975

Pat and I met Rena Albanesi for the first time in 1958 when we vacationed back east. Rena lived in Yonkers, N.Y. then. She came out to California twice, once in the 60s. I took her to the Crosby Pro Am Golf Tournament at Pebble Beach and was able to introduce her to Bing. She came out here again in 1977 and Pat, Rena, and I were able to attend a special mass in honor of Bing at his church in Burlingame on the day of his funeral. Bing always knew my name since I introduced myself to him in 1959.

I became more involved with Club Crosby in 1957 or so when I was appointed West Coast Representative. I used to write a column in each journal containing Crosby news from this coast.

In approximately 1959 Rena became president of the club and asked me to be vice president. She handled all the work involved and just wanted me to continue writing my column in each journal. Rena did a great job. She loved Bing, and her involvement was indeed a labor of love.

Rena Albanesi, Priscilla Koernig, Pat Sullivan and Mary Maloney in New York, 1958

For some reason, no journal was produced in 1970. After a few concerned members wrote to me about this, I had to write to Rena to find out what was wrong and if I could do more to help. Without her ever saying what was wrong, she wrote and said that she thought it was time for her to step down. She asked if I'd like to take over. Rena handed over the club to me with $25.00 in the treasury. She continued to be a good advisor and helped with other information as to what to do. She had devoted over twenty or more active years to Club Crosby.

I asked Pat Sullivan to be vice president and raised money for the club treasury by selling fruitcakes, candies, etc. to friends and co-workers. In 1951 I had graduated from high school and started working at the Bank of America in San Francisco after having to move up there after my parents passed away. I worked in various jobs at the bank until retirement in 1993. We built the club treasury up not only that way, but by getting friends and co-workers to join and also registering the club in magazines. We were able to purchase "the monster," as Pat and I called it, a lithograph machine that you had to hand crank. I typed and used the monster in San Francisco, and then Pat and I both typed half of the journal.

Then in 1972 I moved back to San Mateo into my parents' home. We switched positions, Pat becoming president and me vice-president-treasurer. I shipped the monster to Pat and she did the hand cranking! We still continued to share the typing.

Then a miracle happened in 1973. A lady I worked with knew the person who was in charge of Bank of America's Reproduction Department. Ron graciously agreed to xerox our journals twice a year for just a reasonable donation to their department to be used for their Christmas party. They printed the journal for about five years but then couldn't continue because of their work load. We found a printer in San Mateo who wasn't too expensive. Pat and I still continued sharing the typing. About eight or nine local members used to come to my house twice a year to help collate, stamp, address and mail the journals. I don't know what we could have

done without the help of Les and Evelyn Wilson, son Michael and daughter Nancy, Cathie and Hobie Wilson, Frank and Louise Salas, Larry Gunn and Lucille Montillion. It was fun spending the whole day doing this—and we not only felt joy over our accomplishment but relief over getting the journals in the mail.

There was a period of time in 1976 when the club treasury was low in funds again. In the journal we expressed our concern and wrote to the members for help. I realized during this time that Bing took an interest in his club and read and enjoyed each publication. He had his office send us two checks for $100.00 each during this time to help out.

Bing holding a can of cookies Priscilla had given him. (Laguna Honda Hospital, 1972)

I was very fortunate to not only see Bing every year at the Crosby Golf Tournament from 1959 on, but Pat and I were able to attend Bing Crosby TV special rehearsals in 1975 (we stayed with Larry Crosby at his home and he prepared breakfast for us), the Los Angeles concert in 1975, his only Las Vegas appearance (a benefit for which Bing sent us passes) in 1976, several years volunteered Christmas shows for the patients at Laguna Honda Hospital in San Francisco, touring his home in Hillsborough in 1975 and visiting there many times from 1965 on (we've also been in the Pebble Beach home and been shown all around the Rising River Ranch in Northern California), his final United States appearance at the Concord Pavilion (before going to the Palladium and that fatal day in Spain) in August 1977. One of the greatest experiences was interviewing him in person for Club Crosby in 1975 and 1976, and by tape in 1977. On that tape he showed his gratitude to Pat and me and others for the work we were doing.

One of my best friends, Nancy Asianian, used to go with me to the tournament every year. We used to have so much fun following Bing around the golf courses. One time Nancy stopped Bing on the course and a crowd formed around him. Nancy apologized to Bing for this (he did not stop for everyone). He said that it was OK, that he'd stop for us anytime. He used to always look out from his room at Cypress Point to see if we were there waiting, and he'd come down the steps whistling and would graciously stop and talk to us and pose for pictures each year. He told Alan Fisher that when I was around that you could be sure that my camera would be with me. Nancy mentioned to Bing that she and Gary shared the same birthday and year. He was fascinated by that fact. Golf tournament memories—that's another book!

Also during the 60s there were many times when Bing would play in golf tournaments in San Francisco. Fortunately I had a very humane boss who used to let me leave work in the early afternoon "for a doctor's appointment"! She knew I would be following Bing around the golf course. Those days have long since gone from the working world.

In 1965 Kathryn was starring in a local production of *Peter Pan* at the Burlingame Hyatt Music Theatre. We went back stage and Nancy knocked on Kathryn's dressing room door (I was always the shy one and she would do these things for me). The door was opened by Bing, and Nancy belted out, "Oh, Bing" as if we didn't expect Bing to be there, but it did catch us both off guard.

Backstage at the Hyatt Music Theatre in Burlingame, 1965

Then in approximately 1971 I called the Crosby home in Hillsborough to talk to Alan Fisher. I wanted to ask him when the Laguna Honda Hospital show would be. A man answered and I asked for Alan. The man said, "He's not here; can I help you?" Not ever expecting Bing to answer his own phone, I said, "I just wanted to find out when the patients' Christmas show at Laguna Honda Hospital will be" and asked him to have Alan give me a call. I heard "Priscilla, this is CROSBY!" I said something stupid like "Oh, Bing" (à la Nancy!), but he gave me the information I needed and we had a nice conversation. Wonderful memories!

One day in 1971 when I was working in a supervisory position at Bank of America's World Headquarters, I came back from lunch, and there was a message from Bing Crosby's butler. The whole office was in an uproar because Alan had called me.

Pat and I were also privileged to go backstage at both the Los Angeles and Las Vegas concerts. It was then that I realized that Bing at times got a little nervous when performing. His autograph wasn't as relaxed as those that he signed at home or on the golf course. Flying back from Las Vegas was a "ball." Alan Fisher was on our plane and insisted that we sit with him. He is a jolly and tremendous person. We had fun and laughs all the way back home.

I also enjoyed bringing or sending Bing cookies when he was convalescing and on every Christmas from about 1960 on. He always acknowledged them. In fact, we saw the Crosbys enjoying them after the Laguna Honda Hospital performances. Alan Fisher told me that Bing used to take a few cookies hunting with him. Alan also told me that one Thanksgiving when the Crosbys had the Hopes for dinner, they were both talking about what their fans had done for them. Bing told Bob about the sheet cake I had made and decorated containing a caricature of Bing with various Crosby hobbies drawn with icing on it. This was made for our first local meeting in 1971.

Bing always told Kathryn that she could trust Rena, Pat and myself. Kathryn asked me to help sort things out for the auction she had in 1982 and for a tape of patriotic songs of Bing's for the North Carolina Tournament. I've also had tea and champagne with Kathryn at the Crosby home on several occasions.

We were also very fortunate to meet Bob Crosby, Gary, Dennis, Philip and Lindsay (we still keep in contact with Phil, also with Alan Fisher) and see Harry, Mary Frances and Nathaniel grow up through the years. It's a thrill when your life-time idol introduces you to someone and says your first and last name (pronounced correctly).

One of the regrets in my whole life is that I didn't have the nerve to at least hug Bing. One time at Laguna Honda, he was standing behind the Christmas tree waiting to go on stage. I was standing near him and noticed some lint on the back of his jacket. I picked it off and he turned around. I told him what I had done. He thanked me and smiled. I really think now, that if I had had the nerve to give him a hug, he might have been embarrassed, but would have graciously understood because I do know that he liked and trusted us very much, and knew how much I cared for him.

We have wonderful memories and have met a lot of nice people through the years from all over the United States and the world through Club Crosby.

P.S. If any member is ever in the San Francisco area and would like to see the Crosby Room in my home, I would love to meet you, but please write to me ahead of time — at 1423 Oak Street, San Mateo, CA 94402.

Priscilla's Cake , 1971

Last picture Priscilla took of Bing

Preparing for the Auction

Interviewing Bing, 1976

Kathryn Crosby

April 23, 1996

Wayne L. Martin
Editor Bingang
Club Crosby
435 So. Holmes Ave.
Kirkwood MO 63122

Dear Mr. Martin:

Many thanks for the winter 1995-96 issue of Bingang. It remains the oldest and best of all fan publications. I wish it a happy 60th anniversary. I can assure you that Bing was always delighted with it.

You ask about a second volume of MY LIFE WITH BING. Indeed I have been working on it for 15 years, but I get such a lump in my throat from 1970 on that I have despaired of ever finishing. I seem condemned to spend the rest of my life missing Bing.

As your magazine indicates, The Crosby golf tournament continues each first week of June at beautiful Bermuda Run, North Carolina, and of course you're all invited. We play Bing's songs and show his movies all week long.

As you also note, I am finishing my first year's run as Melissa Frake in the Theater Guild's production of STATE FAIR. After a lengthy tour, on April 20 we completed our first month on Broadway. As Bing once remarked, "If you just hang on long enough, reality will finally live up to your expectations." Any visitors are invited to drop by my dressing room for a chat.

My best wishes for continued success in the fine work that you are doing.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Crosby

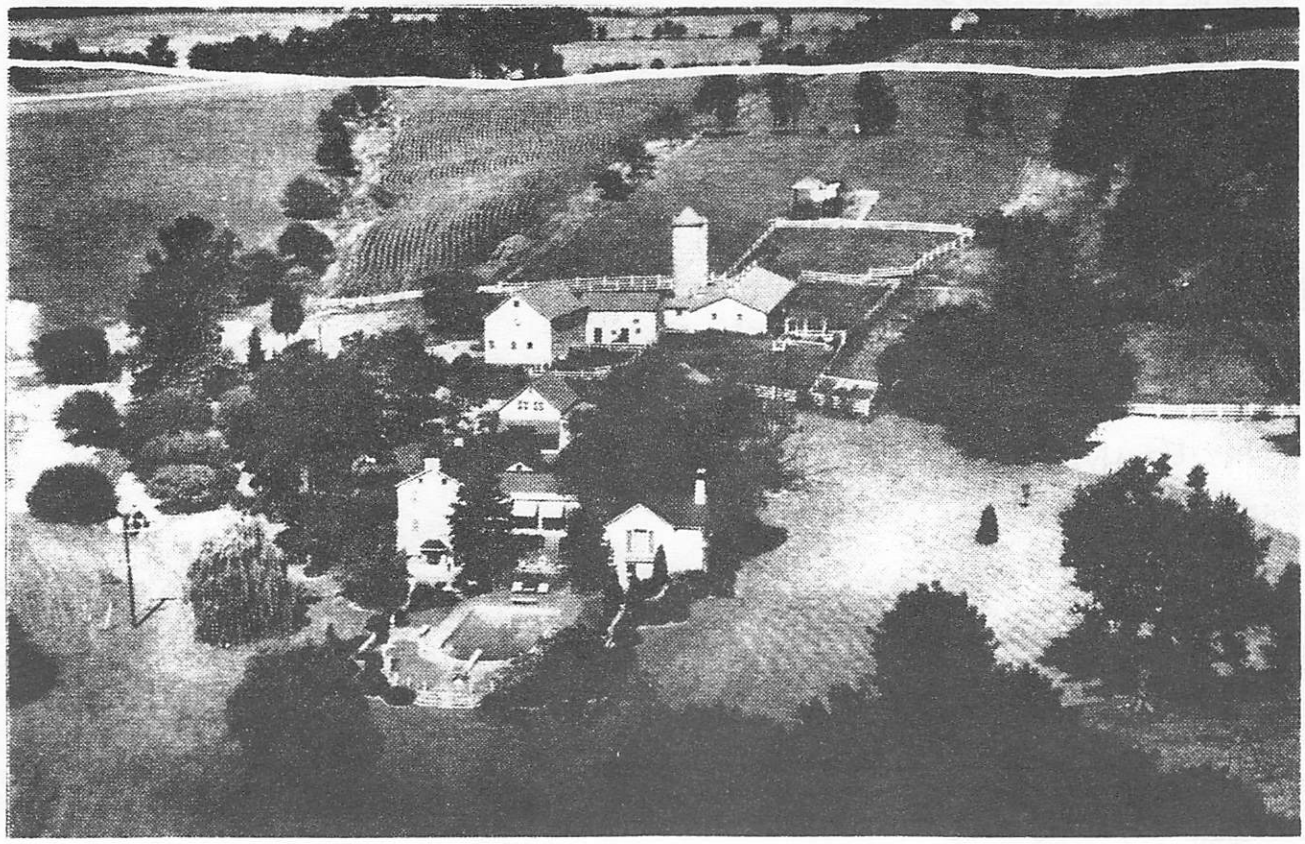
Kathryn Crosby

Bing, Whiteman, and Walking Horse Farm

By Tom Turner

Lakeport, California member Helen Tolton recently wrote an enthusiastic letter and enclosed an article she had asked a member of her church to put on paper after he had shared several interesting stories. It turns out that Tom Turner worked for Paul Whiteman at his 600-acre Walking Horse Ranch in Hunterdon County, New Jersey during the 1950s. What really piqued Helen's interest was Tom's reminiscences about a couple of encounters he had with Bing while working there. Thanks to both of them, we are all able to enjoy this unique perspective of Bing and his mentor, Paul Whiteman. *M.S.*

RIGHT: Paul and Margaret Whiteman with Bing.
BELOW: Walking Horse Farm from the air.



Having just graduated from Arizona State College at Tempe, but with no job lined up, a new baby, and with my wife's father having just passed away, my wife and I decided to go to New Jersey. This is where she had grown up and, as we couldn't afford just a visit, we decided that I would get a job there and then we would return to Arizona in a couple of years. A good plan, but it was actually eight years before we returned.

Finding a job was not easy, and I went to work for an outfit that kept bulls for breeding purposes. While there I ran into one of the technicians that serviced Walking Horse Farm, which was owned by Paul Whiteman. He told me that Mr. Whiteman was looking for a herdsman, so I called and made an appointment to talk with him a couple of days later. The way I figured it, if I didn't get the job at least I would get to meet this famous man and that would really be something for this old desert country boy.

I drove to his farm, which was near the town of Rosemont on the Delaware River and not too far from where we were then living. The farm was very pretty, with beautiful barns, rolling hills, and extensive woods all fenced in for cattle. There were two houses, and both were very impressive. The first you saw as you drove into the place was a large stone house dating back to the time when that part of the country was still under British rule. In fact, it had been the home of one of the British governors. This was the house we were to live in, although we had only the upper story. The lower part was not suitable for an apartment.

The second house was the Whitemans'. It sat at the end of a dirt road and wasn't noticeable at first glance from the road into the farm. This arrangement kept most of the sightseers from driving up to the main house and invading the Whitemans' privacy. It was astounding what some people would do just to get a look at the house and possibly the great man himself. Quite often I had to go over to the house and run off people who had parked in the driveway and were preventing the Whitemans from getting out.

Although my appointment was with Mr. Whiteman, I first had to pass an audition with Mrs. Whiteman, or Maggie as she was known to us (but surely not to her face). It was she who ran the place, not Paul, as he was gone a lot. He did do the cattle buying and in general called the shots with regard to farming.

When I was finally shown into the presence of the great man—and he was a very big man—I found him to be a very likable sort and generally found him that way all the time I worked for him. I guess he liked me, too, as he hired me that very afternoon. I found that I was not to be just the herdsman but also the farm manager, errand boy for Mrs. Whiteman, and chief cook and bottle washer. I had problems from the start balancing my assignments for the day between the two of them, so it was an interesting experience. *But*—the people that I was to meet made it worth it.

By the time I arrived, the Whitemans had gotten away from showing the Tennessee walking horses for which the farm was named and turned to raising purebred Angus cattle. Even this operation had been reduced, and we were mainly raising young stock. We also had a small flock of sheep, and the lambs were usually sent to friends at Easter time. Walkalong, the only horse left from their showing days, was one of the best Whiteman ever had. Walkie, as we called him, became my good friend and followed me around when I was working in the fields. He was very old, and one of my saddest days was when I had to make the decision to have him put down. After that it was Walking Horse Farm in name only.

Paul and I took several cattle buying trips, and one in particular sticks out in my mind. We went to a place over in Pennsylvania and bought seventeen head of calves. The people there were shorthanded, and it was taking a lot of time for them to cut out the ones we wanted. It was just too much for this old Arizona boy to take, so I jumped in and cut out the calves that I wanted and was done with it. Unfortunately, it was pretty sloppy in that pen and I got well splattered with manure and mud. I tried to get most of it off before I got into Paul's nice, fancy automobile, but the smell remained. He didn't say a word, and I figured that he was just being nice. We stopped at a diner to get some lunch and, of course, the local news hound found us out and wanted an interview. Pappy, as we called Mr. Whiteman, granted it and talked to the reporter while I tried to make myself as inconspicuous as possible. He told the reporter what we were doing up there and then he said, "Tom here is my manager. He's an Arizona cowboy and he can cut calves out of a herd on foot the best I've seen!" These are not his *exact* words, but they'll do.

Pappy had a room in the lower part of the house that I used for an office to keep the farm's records, and just through a connecting door was the Trophy Room, as I called it. The walls were covered with theater bills and pictures of all the greats of the Big Band Era—the Dorseys, Glenn Miller, Phil Harris, and Bing Crosby. You name them and they were there. It was interesting to me how many of the big names started with the Paul Whiteman Band. During my stay there I got to meet a few of these people, even though by then the Big Band Era had pretty well passed by, and Paul was now working in the new media of television.

That brings me to the main reason I was asked by Helen Tolton to write this article in the first place—Bing Crosby. When she asked, I told her that I would have to focus it on Pappy Whiteman as I had only met Bing twice, but I remembered both times very clearly.

The first time, I was cleaning pens in one of the barns, shoveling manure into a spreader, when I heard the sound of someone walking down the aisleway in the other section. As I looked up, a man appeared with a soft plaid hat on and wearing a wind breaker. I asked if I could help him. He replied that he was visiting Paul and was just taking a walk. I had walked up to the mangers and could finally see his face under the hat. It was then that I realized it was Bing! We talked for some time, mostly about horses. He asked me about myself and seemed interested in where I had come from and what I'd done in my short lifetime. When a car pulled up outside, he excused himself and left.

The second time I met Bing, it was for a longer time and was a lot more fun. Pappy liked to shoot trap and skeet and was quite good at it. He had a trap and skeet range built on the farm, and several times while I was there he and others went shooting. Once in a while I would help out with the traps. On this particular occasion I was called over to the big house at mid-morning. When I went into the room where Pappy was, Bing was also there, along with another man whom I immediately recognized as Phil Harris, an entertainer who was one of my favorites. Pappy said that they wanted to go shooting

up on the range and since he couldn't go himself, he asked if I would go up with them. I couldn't very well refuse, so off we went.

I called the young man from the farm next door, and he came over to operate the traps. The two of them took out shotguns (Ithacas, I think) that cost more than my car had. Since my brother shot both traps and skeet, I knew a little bit about it. The next two and a half hours were one of the greatest times of my life. Both men were very good and most of the time matched shot for shot, but—I'm sorry to report—Phil Harris was the best. Being Phil Harris, he began to rub it in towards the end, and finally Bing said, "Phil, I'll shoot five birds against you from one position for five hundred dollars." Phil replied, "You're on. Name the position." So Bing did. Bing then beat him four to three. Phil asked, "How did you do that?" Bing replied, "That was your worst position." With that, Bing walked over to the little clubhouse, put his shotgun into its bag and said, "I'm ready to go and I'll settle for a steak at the tavern."

Not long after this I left Pappy's employment, and not too long afterward [in 1958] he sold the farm.

CAN YOU TOP THIS?

By Helen Tolton

From *Bingang,* August 1951

The following is from a letter your editor [Virginia Keegan in 1951] received from Helen Tolton of Lakeport, California. I just have to share it with you.

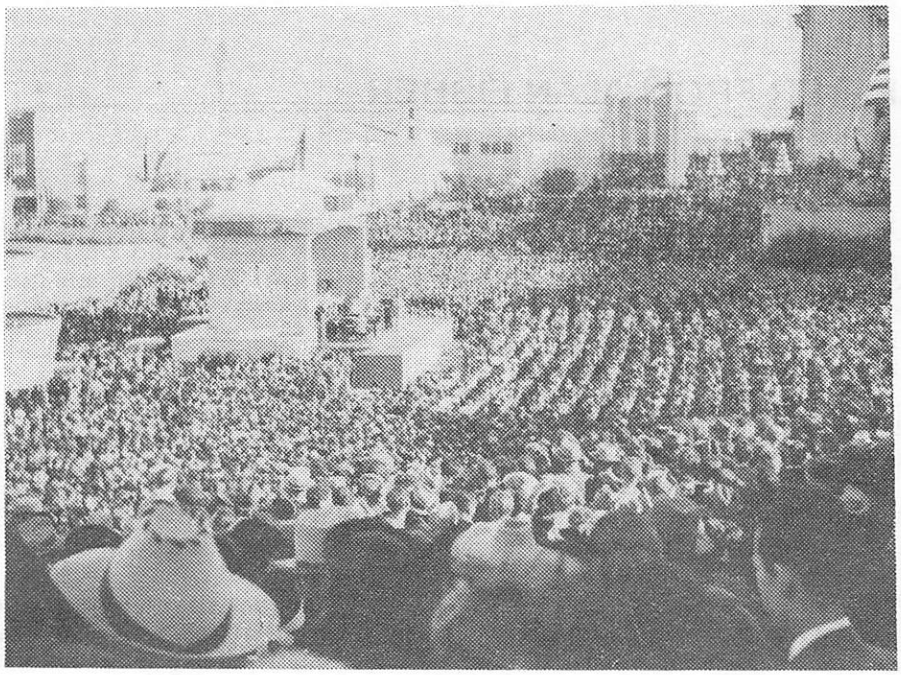
About my Crosby fanship, Virginia, I don't know exactly what you want to know; but I have been a very steady follower since 1930. That was when Bing was a singer with Gus Arnheim's Orchestra and at the Cocoanut Grove. Prior to that time, there were several of his records ("Gay Love," "Oh, Baby, Where Can You Be," "I Kiss Your Hand, Madame") that I was crazy about, but I honestly didn't know they were his records. In fact, I didn't know anything about him. But in 1930 (that was the year I became 16) when he was in the Grove singing "It Must Be True" and "I Surrender, Dear" I knew who he was—and all about him. And I have been "this way" ever since. The thing about this that is so dear to my heart is that I got in on the ground floor. In other words, I don't have to go backwards and read of the various phases of his career. I was there.

I remember, distinctly, practically every change he's made from then till now. I'll never forget his nights of singing in the Grove! Can you imagine a two-hour uninterrupted broadcast every night with Bing doing practically all the vocals and all of the intermission numbers? Well, that was in 1930. One of the many silly little things I've got and will probably never part with is a piece of sheet music. It's the originally released music for "It Must Be True" with a picture of young Bing on the cover. Under the picture it says, "As written for and sung by Bing Crosby of 'Three Rhythm Boys' fame." That might not be the exact wording, but it's the general idea. I don't even play the piano but I'd never part with that piece of sheet music.

The time he spent working in the Grove might have been short but it is indelibly impressed on my mind. I have in my collection all the records he made (I think there were 7) while at the Grove. I remember well his audition from New York. I remember how sick with disappointment I was when it was announced that he couldn't be on. It was postponed twice I think before he was able to make it. When Bing finally came on, how wonderful it was to hear his dear voice. Outside of his records, there had been a little lapsed time since I had

Bing with Eddie Lang (1932)

heard him. I don't remember the exact length of time between his Grove "ousting" and his CBS audition in New York. It probably wasn't too long, but I remember that it seemed like forever to me then. Did you know that Bing once worked, indirectly, for M.J.B.? When he was with Gus Arnheim, the Arnheim group was on the air once a week for a half hour sponsored by the M.J.B. Company. The program was called "The M.J.B. Demi-Tasse Review." It seems to me that it came on on Wednesday night between 7 and 7:30, but that's an awfully long time to remember exact times and days. I always thought I'd enjoy having that checked sometime just to see how my memory served me. It was Bing's duty to open the program by singing a theme song whose opening line went: "Drink a cup of good old M.J.B.," etc., etc. I thought he even sounded beautiful on that. I wonder how many other Crosby fans remember Bing on



Bing at Treasure Island (1939)

Bing on the Golf Course (1942)

that program. I would love to hear from any that did.

When Bing started recording for Brunswick (after he left Arnheim) I was extremely interested in each of his records as he made it. I never bought any because we did not have anything to play them on. (I had to wait for ten years and then pay fancy prices for the darn things—used.) By that time I was married and my husband, being as foolish as I, bought a record player and we went mad trying to corral those early records.

The first time I ever saw Bing in person was in 1932. He was making a P.A. tour and it was at the Fox Oakland theatre that I had the good fortune to catch him. Eddie Lang was with him and was his sole musical accompaniment. I will always consider it one of the "privileges" of my life to have seen and heard Eddie Lang as well as Bing. They really went together like salt and pepper. Just listen to any of Bing's early Brunswicks (before Eddie's death) and you'll be convinced. If you're interested in the songs he sang at that show, I'll list them: "Was That The Human Thing To Do?," "Love Me Tonight," "Some Of These Days," "Dinah," "It Must Be True," "Fool Me Some More," and "I Surrender, Dear." And that's the order he sang them in, too.

Even after 19 years, I can't forget any part of it. Bing had his hair then and was very good looking. One thing about Bing that hasn't changed a bit is his eyes. Every time I see him I am struck by that thought, "just like the first time." Back in 1932 one of the first things I noticed were those blue, blue eyes and each time I have seen him since that is the first thing that I have noticed. They just don't change.

The second time I saw him in person was in October 1939 at the Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island. As "seeing" Bing goes, it wasn't too successful because we were so far away from him, but the sound system was good and we heard him well. But the thing I could write a book on was trying to get over to Treasure Island. What a day!

I next saw Bing in October of 1942 when I had the good fortune to take in that Bing Crosby-Bob Hope golf match. Next I saw him in San Francisco in early 1943 at some kind of a benefit show. We paid a fancy price to get into the thing but it was well worth it. The thing that stands out most in my mind concerning that show is that Bing actually wore those much discussed "Henna" pants. I never saw anything so startling in my life. He wore a blue coat with them so you can imagine what the effect was. Not long after that (3 or 4 weeks maybe) we saw him when he and Dinah Shore appeared in San Francisco with Paul Whiteman and The King's Men at what was called a "George Gershwin Memorial Festival." That whole show climaxed anything I had ever seen before or since. He sang "Somebody Loves Me" and "Maybe" and he and Dinah did all those duets from "Porgy And Bess." It was really wonderful. About that time the war took him away to camp shows, Europe, etc. He just didn't take part in any public functions so I didn't get another opportunity to see him until last year when, thanks to you, I saw those two shows in San Francisco. That was the last time I saw him in person, but I hope not the *last time*—if you know what I mean.

Oh, I did see him on several occasions at Del Mar race track (1940-41), but always from a distance. You've never lived till you've heard him open the day's festivities at Del Mar by singing "Where The Turf Meets The Surf." I understand that there are a few recordings kicking around but I have never seen one. It was never commercially made or released. I'd sure like to have one.

Well, didn't I tell you this was going to turn into a book? When somebody mentions Bing I just get carried away. . . . . .

This article was a small part of a 20-page letter Helen Tolton sent to Virginia Keegan. The title was chosen by Virginia. Pictures have been added in this reprinting, and we did a little re-editing.

Helen is one of our oldest members in terms of years of membership. She joined Club Crosby in 1948 and says she would have joined it earlier had she known about it.

A LETTER FROM ALAN FISHER

Dear Wayne,

Thank you for your letter. My association with the Club was of course through Priscilla and a dear friend of hers, Patricia Sullivan. I can say with hand on heart these two ladies were the most retiring people, a lovely trait in anyone and one Mr. Crosby admired enormously. He knew they actually loathed invading his private life, yet he always called them his friends--FAN was never a word he ever, ever used.

I think I can humbly say that few film stars ever were as concerned with their admirers as he was. The night before he died--Mrs. Crosby had returned to California with Mary Frances and Nathaniel, leaving Harry in London as he was enrolled in RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art). I had taken Harry to the theatre and we ate a meal afterwards. Upon returning to the apartment around 11:30 p.m. Harry went to his room. As I followed him I saw a light under the dining room door--knowing exactly where the switches were I opened one of the two large doors, slid my hand in without actually going in the room. A thing I feel all of us have done at one time or another! I put the room in total darkness, thinking as I did it, how odd--Bing Crosby would never leave a light on if he left a room and I knew he would have been in bed by 10 p.m.!

An amused voice said, "I suppose, Alan, that means go to bed." I was thunderstruck--Bing Crosby up at 11:30 p.m. writing letters? He used the dining room table as an office on this occasion. I immediately felt--for no apparent reason--there was something terribly ominous about it. At that very moment and ever since whenever I reflect upon it. Looking at him he looked very tired and concerned. I said to him, "What on earth, sir, are you sitting writing letters at this hour for?" He replied, "See these people--people who couldn't get tickets for the Palladium, people who missed the show because of family illness, etc. etc. I simply had to answer these letters." He had handwritten eleven letters. He handed them to me to post the following morning, which I did. He left for Spain at 8:00 a.m. I posted his letters at 9 a.m. He died on the golf course that very afternoon. Those people who he wrote to would not have received their letters till the following morning.

I myself heard of his death in an odd way. I was visiting an extremely close friend of both my wife and myself who has worked for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, for over forty years. His position is similar to a butler but has a more personal role in H.M.'s life. I was in his sitting room when a junior footman knocked on the door and burst in. "Reg, didn't you know the Crosbys? There was a TV flash mid-program to say he has passed away."

I immediately reflected on my last thoughts of him and realized--Almost to the very end it was people like the members of the Crosby Club he was most concerned about. Rather a touching end I feel!

How clever you all were to have followed his star. It was one that shone ever so bright in its firmament. I was not an admirer of the actor or the singer, but I was of the man. Perhaps that is an even greater tribute?

Thank you for asking me to contribute.

Yours Sincerely,

This five-page handwritten letter of April 26 was received by the editor. We have typed it to conserve space. Thank you, Alan, for your beautiful letter!

Paragraphs From The Past

THE BELATED KICK-OFF!
(The Ritz Brothers must have been playing)

Handwritten air-mail from "Rootin-Tootin' Two-Gun Shootin":

Dear Bingang:

Vacation time is over and getting ready to level again. New picture should start within ten days and the ole Kraft Music Hall will ring with my dulcet tones on the seventh of October. Nothing of unusual interest to report, but I will await with anxiety your reactions to these activities—Thanks for everything.

BING, 1937

(Editor's Note: At this time our journal was being published in North Vassalboro, Maine, and Cecilia "Ceil" Joseph was the Active President and Editor. Dues were 50 cents, U.S.A.; 75 cents, Foreign.)

Dear Phil [Philomena Vendetti]:

Dear Friends,

I think my wife has written you before about the selfish esteem in which we hold Bing Crosby. He has been a great source of happiness to us both, in the hours we are apart from each other. Every song Bing sings, every word, and every action on the screen has its own particular meaning to us and even though we see and hear Bing separate, 2400 miles apart, we feel as if we were together in his presence. . . .

Mary (my wife) and I possess all of Bing's records, accumulating them through the past ten years. We take good care of them, because in future years, they will bring back the treasured memories of good times we had together listening to Bing. . . .

Thanks for the opportunity to send a word to *Bingang*. . . .I'll be seeing you where the crowd is, and that's usually with "Bing."

P.F.C. WM. J. LANDON, December 1943.

(Editor's Note: The two letters above have been reproduced from Pat Sullivan's "The Crosby Connection," published in honor of the Club's 40th anniversary.)

I'm greeting you this time for our professional-looking "Special Edition" to celebrate Bing's 20th Anniversary as a star. Of course, Bing has been in show business for more than 20 years, as most of us know; however there were a few years of experience and small parts that aren't included in this score of years.

It's an honor for me to still be associated with the club as President at this very memorable occasion and, as I've said time and time again, it's you members and my more-than-helpful staff associates who have made it possible for me to keep the club at the high calibre and standard that it is today. My heartfelt thanks to you all.

The greatest entertainer in the world today—that's our Bing. . . .

RUTH NESS, January 1951

TWENTY-FIVE PROUD YEARS

The years now number twenty-five
Since first our Club was formed
For Bing, who many songs has sung
And many hearts has warmed.

Whose long career's been followed with
An interest sharp and keen.
Who has, in many lives, I'm sure,
An inspiration been.

The Crosby charm and magic voice
Have mellowed with the years.
He's still our "Mr. Music,"
And we greet him now with cheers!

To us, his fans, he'll always be
Our super-favorite man.
This brightest-shining member
Of the famous Crosby clan.

For twenty-five proud years we've known
Bing—acting, singing, living.
To us, his name means all that's fine,
He's always pleasure-giving.

So on your Anniversary, Bing,
A toast we'll drink, 'tis true.
We'll stand and raise our glasses.
Mr. Crosby, here's to you!

DORIS OKE, May 1961

Dear Rena:

Thanks for your letters. I'm delighted that you and your friends enjoyed the Hollywood Palace show on Christmas Eve.

Of course I don't have to tell you how excited the children were about appearing on the show and about watching it later on when it appeared on their television set. They couldn't believe that there they were, up there on the tube.

I must say they were completely without stage fright or self-consciousness, when we did the show—just eager to get on and do their stuff. So I imagine they're going to grow up into full-fledged ham actors.

All best wishes to you and members of the Club.

BING CROSBY, May 1967

NOTES FROM RENA

Here I am at last with the journal. I know it has been a long time since the last issue. With Bing taking things easier it is harder to put out interesting issues, with things in it that all members have not seen. I do hope you will find this one so.

Before I continue, I would like to say that due to costs of putting a journal together, I will have to raise the dues to $1.50, and the stamps to 3 12-cent stamps instead of 8-cent stamps. It has been quite a few years since we

raised the dues. I do hope you will all understand. . . .

The most exciting thing that happened was the appearance of Bing and Bob Hope at the opening of the New Madison Square Garden. All the years that I lived in New York, I hoped they would appear together some time. Now, living here in Connecticut, it was impossible for me to go, since it was a Sunday night. I'm sure most of you saw parts of it on Bob's television show. I put together an article from newspaper articles. . . .

I'm sure you all know that Kathryn's book *[Bing And Other Things]* is finally out, and hope you all have found it as enjoyable as I did. I wrote and told Kathryn so. Now, she plans to write another one, which I am looking forward to. . . .

RENA ALBANESI, May 1968

"Will Bing Be Remembered" was a theme begun in the memorial journal of March 1978. Now—a year later—the theme of this issue is to give recognition to some of those organizations and individuals who are doing something to insure that Bing's contributions to music, film, radio and video are remembered and his memory thus perpetuated. That is *Bingang's* goal, so I think it appropriate that we salute others who are actively pursuing the same goal. Our cover honors the newly-formed Bing Crosby Historical Society and, of course, the Gonzaga University Crosby Library as symbols of hope that future generations will always be aware of Bing's tremendous impact on the performing arts. The issue also includes news about the activities of other organizations, clubs and individuals that I am sure are only a representative sample of the honors bestowed upon Bing since his death.

Although we continue to report on special activities and honors, I hope we can now turn our attention more to an historical approach to Bing's career and go forward with the myriad of unfinished research projects needed to be done to insure our goal. . . .

I think it is significant that our membership is growing at an unprecedented rate in the history of the club and that material for this issue was so plentiful that keeping it within reasonable limits due to rising postal costs was extremely difficult. I want to thank all of you who contributed to this journal either directly or indirectly. You are *Bingang* and hold the key to the future. As Vern Wesley Taylor so poignantly put in the journal preface just a short—but somehow so very long—year ago: "We will take it from here, Bing. Because we must."

—PATRICIA SULLIVAN, March 1979

ONE DOZEN FOR BING

At a setting sun, last November's gray,
I went to his silent site to pray,
And leave a garland twelve above
His resting place beneath God's Love.

His headstone reads "Beloved of All"
Our Bing of range and waterfall.
But golf it was he loved the best,
Topped only by his crooning zest.

He rests beside his Dixie, dad and mother dear,
With Virgin Mary shrine so blesséd and near.
It's there we slowly come to show our care,
Close by to say an "Ave," his Heaven to share.
Anthuriums red were the twelve I left,
Returning to my island home bereft.
Yet Bing's voice ever our hearts will lighten,
Our islands brighten, and Christmases whiten.

—CARMEL GENE GALLEGOS, March 1979

You have written in hundreds of letters since receiving the Newsletter of December 11, 1979, which told of the end of a decade—Pat's and Priscilla's retirement from the helm of Club Crosby and its magazine, *Bingang*. There probably has never been such a genuine and universal outpouring of affection, evidencing a real appreciation for all that they have done for the Club and its members. . . .

It is to be hoped that you have been looking forward to this first edition of *Bingang* since the big change-over. Preparing it has been a challenge, eased greatly by the unexpected assistance of members who volunteered, or at least willingly accepted assignments. Any credit, if credit is due, this issue must go to the writers—after all, an editor can't edit blank sheets of paper! Nearly every one of them volunteered their efforts—one grudgingly accepted an assignment—but all met their individual assignments, with one exception, who was forcibly dragged across the deadline! but with good copy. . . .

We have had much correspondence since the first of the year on the general topic of whether Bing will be remembered properly, and whether other entertainers should be accorded consideration as a peer of the inimitable Bing. No unanimity will ever be reached on this subject, nor should it. One should dread a world in which, for lack of free choice, one would have to accept Bing (or any other worthy, for that matter) as the only one *permitted* to be considered great. Actually, Bing compares even more favorably, when the competition is moved real close to him. Live and let live could be a good motto! Besides, each of us has, by this time, settled this matter to his or her own satisfaction, and whatever else may be said to the contrary, Bing never sought to promote himself by running down a fellow entertainer.

—AL SUTTON, March 1980

This is SHIRLEY NAYLOR ONCE AGAIN REPORTING FROM DOWN UNDER. *Bingang* flew in on April 18 in the midst of my packing, which naturally took second place while I did some quick perusals, but not before I had some minor troubles. Having read the special note, yes, dear readers, I completely removed the two staples and had 51 loose sheets of paper floating around my lounge, then spent 30 minutes sewing them together again!

Well, as you may have guessed from little bits earlier on, I did make it to CROSBY COUNTRY. I left Sydney on April 22nd, and arrived at SFO the same night, after 16 wonderful hours in the air! Really! I rang Priscilla and we had a wonderful talk then made arrangements to get in touch again when I got back to San Francisco on May 12, after my trip, as I was spending a couple of extra days in SFO so I could visit her.

On our leisure day we all took the Monterey and Carmel tour—this I found very interesting, and I was counting on seeing Pebble Beach; on mentioning this to our Tour Escort, Jay, I was told "SHIRLEY, THIS IS NOT ON THE TOUR!" Well, I am not easily deterred, so biding my time, saw the Monterey Cyprus (which you

all know Bing wore on his blazer) clinging TENACIOUSLY on its ROCKY, WIND-SWEPT PERCH and past Clint Eastwood's house, which was usually stopped at but none of us wanted to, so I said "I AM A CROSBY FAN AND DO NOT INTEND TO MISS SEEING WHERE BING HAD HIS TOURNAMENTS, AND THAT IS THE MAIN REASON I TOOK THIS TRIP." Jay weighed the Pros and the Cons and said, "Well, as no one wants to see Clint's house, we will stop at Pebble Beach." So I made history; it was wonderful to walk through the gates knowing the many times Bing had done the same thing—found the monument which had been erected, and had my picture taken, which incidentally came out quite good. . . .

—SHIRLEY NAYLOR, October 1980

I can still recall the butterflies-in-the-stomach feeling as I rang Al Sutton's doorbell for the first time. I had found his address on a dusty bit of typing paper on a shelf in a Sacramento record shop, and having found a pencil nearby I copied it down, as it had boldly typed at the top "ANOTHER CROSBY COLLECTOR." I marvelled at my good fortune—imagine that—not only was there someone else who liked Bing Crosby—he even lived in Sacramento! I had two 78's by Bing; I wondered if Al Sutton had *any.* "They don't make them old records no more" the record store proprietor said as I paid for my "rare and valuable" black label Decca of Bing singing "San Fernando Valley" and stepped back into the sunny world of people who didn't smell like musty cardboard and shellac. How little they knew!

It had taken me more than six months to work up the nerve to call this Al Sutton fellow, and to my surprise, he invited me over. I contemplated carrying my two 78's, but I didn't want to seem "uppity" on our first meeting, so I went unarmed.

As the door opened the butterflies left, and were replaced by confusion—where was the young fellow I had talked to on the 'phone? Whose grandfather was this? Oh no! I'm at the wrong place! But then I heard, "Hi, I'm Al Sutton—you must be Ray Crenshaw—come on in."

After a short walk, we were standing in his den. He made no gesture or motion toward the west wall of the room, but George Shearing could have seen it-**Records!** How—Who—How Many? Words just wouldn't come, so I listened. That afternoon flew by as I was charmed right out of my fears and learned more in that afternoon than I thought possible. . . .

JAMES RAYMOND CRENSHAW,
"STRINGBEAN CARRUTHERS," June 1985

This may well be the last opportunity for Al Sutton to make any editorial comment in *Bingang,* so here goes!

I think I would be remiss if I didn't tell you, one and all, that I have fully enjoyed myself over the last six or seven years. The subject matter has been in my special field of interest, and we have been fortunate in finding authors who subscribed to the same philosophy as your editor. Whether this has been a winning combination or not depends upon you, the readers. If you have read each issue feeling that you were learning something new, and for real, about Bing, then all has not been in vain.

We have editorially repeated that we were striving to be more than just another "fan" magazine. It seems that the adoring, gushy type of tribute to a performer eventually does him in, and alienates the readers also. Rather, we have tried to continue a series of articles and reprints that had been carefully researched in the first place.

One thing the present officers feel they can take pride in—they have not joined in with the caravan of "friends," "fans," or "associates" of Bing who have felt an obligation to uncover and flaunt their knowledge of some of Bing's less-than-perfect moments. . . .I have nothing but contempt for those "in the know" who can't wait to tell all the world about the delicious slimy gossip that has come up about a person. And when that person goes into print, but still protests that he admires Bing, I say "_____" (expletive deleted). He, or she, must look elsewhere for admiring pats on the head. . . .When this is all turned over to the new officers, I will feel a real sense of loss, for *Bingang* has been a purpose in my life the last several years. I know I am a better person for having known all of you, and I trust that some of you have had a spark struck through our contact.

AL SUTTON, December 1986

Dear Wayne:

I am so sorry to hear about the death of so many of our members. At my age, this seems to be par for the course, club members or not. But for our club it seems doubly sad, as we have so few older members who were "there" when Bing was young, out and about, and starting on his tremendous road to success. When the last one has gone, there will be no "first hand" stories to tell. I think all of us "oldies" should get down on paper all the choice little tidbits that we can write about.

HELEN TOLTON, December 1989

. . .Wayne and I are both amazed to think that we are already into our fifth year at the helm of Club Crosby. When we first took over the reins, we talked very seriously about how we could get the "club" feeling back into Club Crosby. Certainly the geographic size of the United States has always prohibited mass meetings of the membership and will surely always be an obstacle hard to overcome monetarily and travelwise. You might be surprised to learn that even Wayne and I have never met face-to-face (but we're working on it). *[Editor's Note: As of 1996, that still hasn't happened!]*

So we felt the next best thing would be to encourage our membership to contribute more to the content of their own club journal, *Bingang.* We felt that a journal that only contained articles by Wayne and myself would give a rather limited view of things Crosby and would be exceptionally dull to both the readers and ourselves. Although we had no "staff" writers churning out copy for each issue, fortunately we did have a list of about ten contributors who could be counted on to supply material of interest on a fairly regular basis. It seemed kind of silly to go on producing a journal if only a handful of people were interested in participating. Why go through all the trouble when we could just as well get together amongst ourselves and exchange our ideas and information? We decided instead that in order to have a viable club we had to make it a top priority to get the entire membership involved and solicit articles and artifacts from anyone who wanted to share their Crosby experiences or

expertise with fellow collectors. . .

Wayne and I are always available for any comment, question, or criticism because we want to be a part of making this the best darn club going for anyone interested in the life and career of Bing Crosby.

MARK SCRIMGER, July 1991

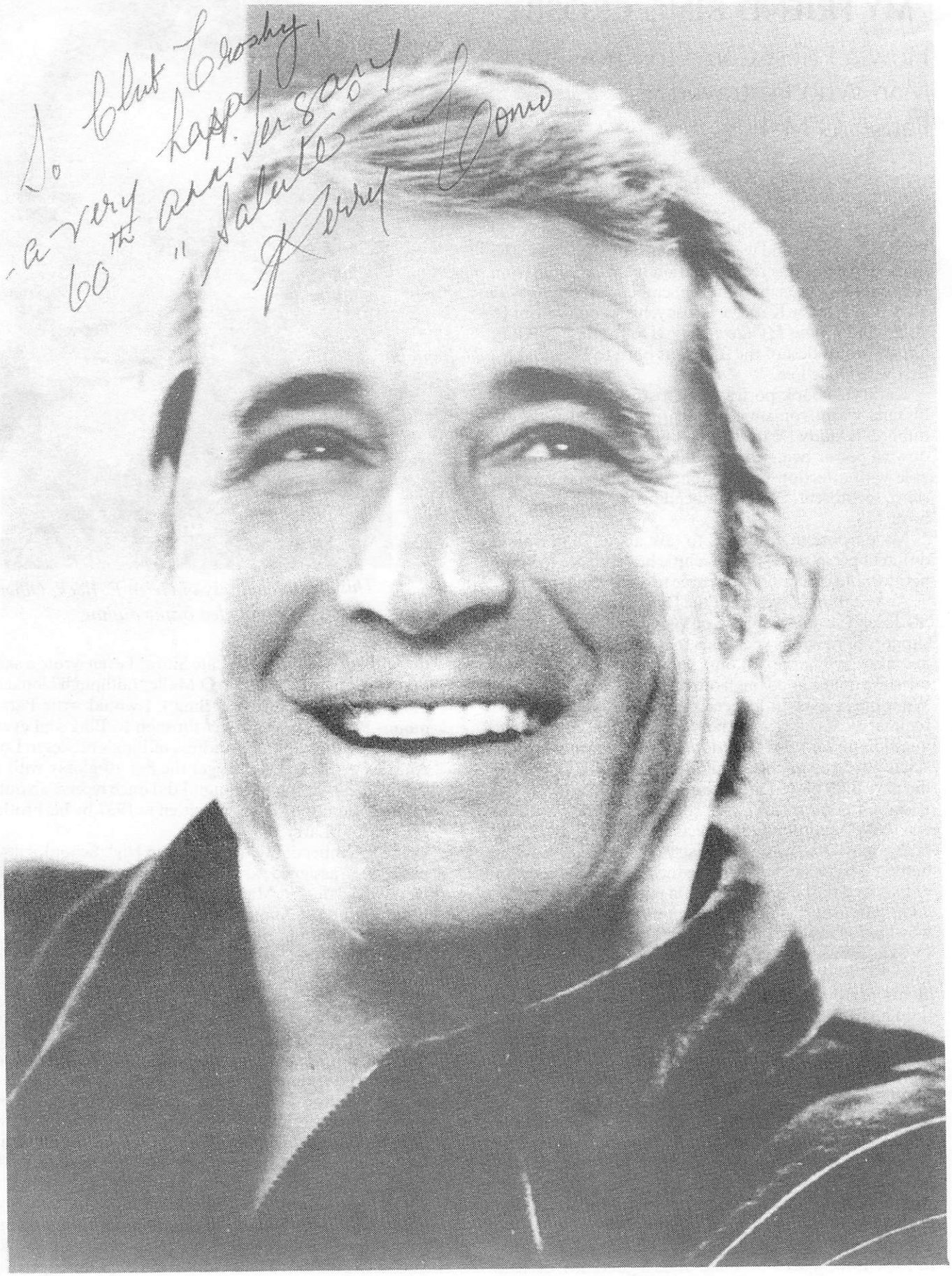
. . .Why have we survived. . .when so many fan clubs for other popular singers and actors of the past have long since disappeared?

First of all, our club honors a man who was truly one of the giants of the entertainment world. His style and voice created the foundation of popular music for generations. As a singer, actor, and radio and TV star, his face and voice were constantly before the public. In spite of trashy efforts to blacken his name, his influence is still felt in many ways, and his name is fondly remembered all over the world.

Second, we have been blessed with faithful members, who not only pay their dues every year but support us in other important ways. What would we do without the articles you write, the clippings you send in, and your letters of encouragement? We simply could not exist without your interest and your help.

Third, we have always had people who are willing to provide leadership, take care of the dues, put the magazine together, proofread it, get it printed, put on mailing labels, stick on the stamps, and lug big boxes of journals to the post office. Mark and I have tried to continue in that tradition. We hope that we have succeeded and that we can provide this service for years to come. . . .

WAYNE MARTIN, December 1992


To Club Crosby!
a very happy
60th anniversary!
"Saluto"
Perry Como

MY FRIEND BING CROSBY

How a Priest Came to Know the Man Who Portrayed Father O'Malley

By Father Robert Murphy

No doubt about it: 1983 was the year Bing Crosby fell from his pedestal and was reexamined by the world. The unusual part of this reexamination is that it came from two books written by family members: *My Life with Bing* (Collage) by Kathryn Crosby, his second wife of 16 years, and *Going My Own Way* (Doubleday) by Gary Crosby, the oldest of the four sons born to Bing and his first wife Dixie Lee.

Kathryn's book portrays a Crosby more familiar to his fans: warm, romantic, and sentimental. Gary's book, dubbed "Daddy Dearest" by a press eager to take Bing down a peg or two, describes Bing as a man uncomfortable with affection or emotion; a father who was too stern, too absent, and too unbending to reach out to his boys.

My purpose in writing is to talk about Bing from a different perspective: that of a little boy who got to know his idol, and of a priest who came to appreciate the man.

As Vocation Director for the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, I am in charge of vocational outreach and support of religious vocations to the Catholic Church. I am also in charge of our seminarians. A common question (and a good one!) often asked of seminarians is: What priest most influenced your decision to enter the seminary? As a seminarian I was often asked that question myself, and the answer I gave which was only slightly tongue-in-cheek was: Father Chuck O'Malley, the part Bing played in *Going My Way* and *Bells of St. Mary's.* I admired and (and still admire) the portrayal and have incorporated aspects of the Fr. O'Malley philosophy into my own ministry: optimism, a sense of humor, a belief in underscoring the positive, the sense of prayer, and the belief that religion puts joy into your life.

Gary Crosby has written: "In a way I did understand why Dad's fans love him so. When I saw *Going My Way* I was as moved as they were by the character he played. Father O'Malley handled that gang of young hooligans in his parish with such kindness and wisdom that I thought he was wonderful too. . .Then the lights came on and the movie was over. All the way back to the house, I thought about the difference between the person up there on the screen and the one I knew at home."

While I also loved Fr. O'Malley, I was not so naive as to believe that Bing and his character were synonymous. I was, however, enamored by the Crosby personality that Bing brought to every role, and I set out to meet the man behind the roles. I Just knew that if we ever met, we would instantly like one another. Pretty bold thinking for a 12-year-old.

I entered St. John's Diocesan High School Seminary in 1962 at the age of 14. I had done a good deal of little theatre and was destined to do more. I already had a sizeable collection of Crosby records and never missed one of Bing's films on the Late Show. I even wrote a skit that year where I played Fr. O'Malley (although I looked more like Gary than I did Bing!). I would write Paramount Pictures to try to get through to Bing and even discovered the name and address of Bing's offices in Los Angeles. At best, I would get the 8 x 10 glossy with a stamped autograph (although I did once receive an out-of-print biography of Bing written in 1937 by his brothers Ted and Larry!).

This picture courtesy of Helen E. Beck. Other photos were provided by the author.

In September of my Junior year in High School, a new priest was assigned to the faculty at St. John's—Fr. Dennis Martin. Fr. Martin was a tall, friendly man with a quiet sense of humor. He seemed to like me and I certainly liked him! He explained to me, after he heard of my interest, that his uncle, a Dr. Edgar FitzGerald, was a fishing buddy of Bing's up in Wallace, Idaho! My big chance, an inside connection! I wrote (and re-wrote) a long letter to Dr. FitzGerald in a style that I hoped would appeal to him (and to Bing!). It was full of my interest in Bing and his music and movies, what I was doing in the seminary, a couple of breezy anecdotes, and the big question—could he get me Bing's home address? In a return letter, dated November 30, 1965, Dr. FitzGerald wrote back: "Dear Bob: I believe the best thing for me to do is forward your letter to Bing, which is what I have done. Sincerely yours, E.J. FitzGerald, M.D."

On December 10, 1965, the Seminary mail was delivered and a large brown envelope was delivered to my room by my friend Leo. "Well, Robert, it looks like you've heard from The Man!" said Leo. I tore open the envelope and was suddenly surrounded by about a dozen brother seminarians! A nicely autographed picture of

Bing addressed "To My Friend, Bob Murphy," and a letter fell out. It was a simple letter, but it gave me his home address! I was told later that this was highly unusual, and years later I was told by Kathryn herself that Bing had taken a personal interest in me and was flattered that something he did had so influenced a young man toward a vocation in a Church he loved!

I enjoyed writing and when I graduated from St. John's was awarded the first "letter" for something other than athletics: Directing the Entertainment! This meant, I knew, my skits, plays, parties for parents, etc. I began to write to Bing with personality: humor, anecdotes, and, most importantly, I really shared with him my thoughts, my hopes and dreams, my struggles. I was amazed, he always wrote back! And the letters between us became warmer and more folksy.

("Dad knew how he was viewed by his fans. Being well-liked was important to him. He talked about it regularly." — Gary Crosby)

He wrote to me with congratulations on graduation from St. John's; about upcoming T.V. shows and new albums; comments on whatever I had written him and always strong encouragement for continuance in the seminary.

In 1968, Bob Hope was coming to town and, with a word from Bing, I was able to go backstage and sit in his dressing room before the show. As I was waiting for Bob to arrive, I fell into conversation with Hope's P.R. man,

In 1968, Bing Crosby arranged for Father Bob Murphy to meet Bob Hope

Bill Faith. Bill was Catholic and a graduate from St. Louis University. We talked about Bing and Bob and the genuine affection between the two and how when they got together, the years seemed to melt away as they fell back into the old routines from their early years at the Paramount Theatre in New York. As we visited, I felt that I was getting more insight into Bing. Suddenly two sheriff's deputies appeared, one of whom looked familiar. The sheriff at the time, Arvid "Hippo" Owsley, lived around the corner from us and his wife and my Mother played bridge together. The deputies looked nervous and they informed me that they had a warrant for Hope. It seemed that one of the dancers in his troupe was behind in his child support and that Hope had agreed to be responsible for his troupe, so the warrant was for Bob Hope! I explained the situation to Bill Faith and suggested that he call Sheriff Owsley and mention the situation. He did, and the deputies sheepishly departed before Hope had arrived. The incident, mild as it was, was overplayed before Bob Hope and I became a bigger hero than I deserved! I found Bob Hope to be as nice and friendly as I had been led to believe and when we talked about Bing he gave me four or five rapid one-liners to send back with his compliments. He also mentioned that he was going to be Grand Marshal for the Rose Bowl on New Years Day, 1969, and ride in the parade with Dorothy Lamour. He thought we should talk Bing into riding along with them. **(We** should talk Bing into it!!!)

Along with the suggestion from Mr. Hope, I also wrote Bing inviting him to perform in Kansas City sometime. He wrote back indicating if I was ever near Hillsborough (the suburb outside San Francisco where he resided with his second family) to stop by and look him up. Kathryn wrote also in July of 1968:

Dear - What do I call you?
Father? or Sir? or Mr.?
Dear Bob:
I took your letter immediately to Bing. He read it and said for you to phone us around August 23. Our number is ---/---- in San Francisco. If he is here, he would be happy to see you.
Very Sincerely,
Kathryn Crosby

First the home address and now their home number! I even had an invitation to boot! I was on my way!

After much negotiation and delay, I flew out of Kansas City on December 26, 1968, accompanied by my good friend, Ken Bien. Ken was an old friend from school who had recently won the Kansas City Junior Open Golf Tournament! I could talk show biz with Bing and Ken could talk golf and, as were both Catholic, we could talk religion!

As soon as our plane touched down, we called Bing's home from a phone at the airport. The little Irish maid who answered (whom Kathryn would later nurse as she died) said she was told to expect our call and was sorry to report that the Crosbys were snowed in up at their ranch in Elko, Nevada! Disaster had struck in a big way! How long would they be up there? She didn't know. I told Ken I was prepared to stay in San Francisco until the cows came home. I had come to see Bing and I was staying until I did! That was that! She suggested that we call Bing at the ranch. After all the letters, this was going to be the first time that I had actually spoken to him! We placed the call and a wary, noncommittal voice answered. I explained who I was and it was only a moment before a familiar voice came on: "Bob, glad you boys made it all right. It's really snowing to beat the band up here. If you can stick around, I'm sure we can make it back home in a day or so. You ought to see some of San Francisco while you're here. I'm sorry I can't show you around. At any rate, give us a call New Year's Eve. I'm sure we'll be in by then." New Year's Eve! We were due back in school on January 3rd! The next couple of days were fun, albeit a tad nervous, as we saw the sights of San Francisco. We were to call Bing around 6 p.m. on New Year's Eve and when we went to call we found everything around the University of San Francisco shut down tight. We had only two nickels between us and

Hillsborough turned out to be a toll call! It suddenly occurred to me to try the old college stunt of tape recording the sound of the nickels going into the phone and then playing it back and forth a few times until we had "put in" the right amount of change. Ken and I had a deep moral discussion about this, but necessity was the mother of invention (even if the mother was dishonest!) and I called the operator and explained that we wanted to call Bing Crosby person-to-person but that we didn't want the sound of the change falling in after he got on the line and could we please put in enough for fifteen minutes and, no, we wouldn't want any refund, thank you! I was amazed. She agreed! (Ken and I had a lot of faults but dishonesty wasn't generally one of them. I'm afraid we thought J. Edgar Hoover was suddenly going to swoop down on that phone booth at any minute!). The phone rang and soon we were confessing to Bing the whole plot! (He was Father O'Malley, after all!) He took it in good stride and invited us to come on over as they had just arrived a few hours before. Wanting to be good guests, I deferred as I knew they must be tired. He countered by inviting us over for breakfast the next morning. New Year's morning! That sounded great and it sounded even better when he invited us to watch the Rose Bowl Parade after breakfast with You-Know-Who as the Grand Marshal!

The next morning dawned bright and early and we hustled down to the Greyhound Station to catch the local to Hillsborough. I clutched my camera and my copy of Kathryn's new book *Bing and Other Things.* Ken was clutching his movie camera and a gold magazine. Once we got off at the station, we grabbed a cab, actually shared a cab with a surprised older lady going to her daughter's for the holiday.

The cabbie knew the address right away and talked about people he had seen go to the Crosbys: "You know, pal, President Kennedy stayed there just a few months before Dallas! Yeah, Bing's a great guy! He always talks to ya."

The cab deposited us in front of a beautiful English Tudor home and we timidly rang the doorbell. The Irish maid answered and ushered us in. The Christmas tree was in the hallway and the unopened presents were still around it. In less than a minute, Kathryn came in. "Thank you so much for stopping by, Bob. This must be Ken. I'm sorry it's taken so long, but the snow was really something. Won't you come into the den and have coffee?" The den was very masculine: dark wood with a high ceiling. Over the fireplace on the mantle there were a number of awards: one from *Look* magazine, a Father of the Year award, and, most apparent to me, Bing's Oscar for *Going My Way.* I sat in a large overstuffed chair that made me feel quite small. I sat with my back to the room's entrance and Kathryn and Ken sat in front. I guessed I was in Bing's chair but didn't know what to do about it. I suppose the thing that impressed me most in those first moments was how open and friendly Kathryn was while never losing her poise. I was startled how she kept eye contact with you while she talked, and yet poured coffee and served it at the same time. "Hello, dear. The boys arrived," Kathryn said, looking over my shoulder. I jumped up and wheeled around like the Pope had just walked in. I was shocked by two things: How small Bing was! I didn't know really what to expect, but he was not a very large man—my guess would have been 5'6" to 5'8" and: He didn't have his toupee on! Having adjusted to that, I took in the whole man. He was wearing a plaid flannel shirt and a pair of regular blue jeans. He had on chucka boots and was smoking a long-stemmed pipe. The writers were right: his eyes were so blue that you were drawn to them right away. He sat down and we visited about a wide variety of topics: sports, the children, the Rose Bowl Game, Bob Hope, etc. After awhile, the children joined us. Harry, a lanky 10-year-old, asked us if we were from

On New Year's Day, 1969, Father Bob finally met Father O'Malley —

Gonzaga (the Jesuit University in Spokane, Washington where Bing had studied so many years ago). I kidded him about his on-camera goof of running a golf cart into the scenery on the last Hollywood Palace television show. He hung his head and mumbled something about it being his Mom's fault. He showed me his guitar, which was a Christmas gift from Glen Campbell.

Mary Francis, already beautiful at 9, was the brightest looking child I had ever met. She sat down while I read her a children's story I had written that I was trying to get published at the time and she hung on every word! She excused herself a short time later as she wanted to go watch "Uncle Bob" on the Rose Bowl Parade on television. Nathaniel, then 7-years-old, stayed and sat staring transfixed at Bing, never varying his gaze. Bing showed me an antelope rug that Trader Vic had sent for Christmas. He was hoping to work up Morris West's *The Devil's Advocate* for the screen, but negotiations weren't progressing very fast. Dean Martin's arranger had talked Bing into doing a new contemporary album called "Hey Jude! Hey Bing!" which included tunes by the Beatles. We sat around while Bing put on a couple of cuts from the master and then, he began to sing along! Kathryn spoke vehemently about her objection to the riots at San Francisco State College and how much she loved the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart. She suggested that I put on the play *Harrianthe 7th* at the seminary. After awhile, Ken and I both felt like visiting cousins and I even picked up the Oscar and began to horse around with it. We watched a little of the Rose Bowl Parade and it seemed a surreal experience watching Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour on television while Curt Gowdy said:

"And here they come, folks, those two famous stars of the eight Road pictures: Grand Marshal, Bob Hope, accompanied by Dorothy Lamour and we wonder what old Bing is doing right now." "I'm staying in out of the cold," Bing retorted. "That's all right for Dottie and Pops, but who needs it!"

We munched on rolls and more coffee and wandered around, finally taking Bing's two labradors out for a walk. Ken took a few feet of home movies with Bing, Kathryn, myself and the dogs and I suggested I take a couple of shots with my camera. My camera! It was not to be found! I had Ken and the Crosbys down on their knees looking under the couches and chairs for the missing Kodak! (As it turned out, I had left it at the bus station.) By midafternoon, we said our goodbyes and Bing's Man Friday, Alan Fisher, took us to the airport. (Fisher was a large, jovial Englishman who had been butler to the Queen and recently has returned to work for Prince Charles and Lady Di.) He confided that he really didn't like Mr. Crosby's singing all that well, but that he was a joy to work for!

That was to be my first and last personal visit with Bing. I continued to call him on the phone occasionally and we would visit like an uncle and nephew. On the morning of my ordination to the priesthood, October 24, 1974, a mailgram arrived: "Our congratulations and all best wishes on your ordination. We rejoice with you. Kathryn and Bing Crosby."

The letters continued as before but now, at least in my mind, they seemed a little more personal. The topics varied widely; *Baseball:* "Nice to know you get a chance to watch the Royals once in a while. They went a long way for an expansion team. George Brett is going to be a superstar, I'm sure, if he can keep the weight off and he attains speed on the bases, because he certainly is great with the bat and looks like a pretty good defensive player, too." *Traveling:* "I've been in Mexico for a month, so I haven't been keeping in touch with the baseball situation..." "Just got back from an extended trip abroad and on the African safari, and found your letter waiting for me when I..." *Television:* "I have a Hollywood Palace which airs early in October and I'm doing a Dean Martin show and a Carol Burnett show..." "Did a Gleason show which is on October 4th. It was great fun working with Jackie and Art Carney, who is a riot."

These were, however, fairly inactive years for Bing: an occasional Hollywood Palace, Variety Show, his yearly Christmas Show, and a couple of guest appearances. The letters between us continued.

Oddly enough, the operation that many thought he would not survive brought him back to the public forum with a vengeance. He wrote he had returned from the African safari in September of 1973 and in January of 1974 the doctors told Bing they feared lung cancer. As it turned out, it was a very rare fungus infection in the abscessed lung, and part of his lung was subsequently removed. Bing feared he wouldn't sing again! He found he could sing though, and better than ever, although an octave lower. Suddenly, he came back for all he was worth. The letters were less frequent but they were full of the records he was recording and the appearances he was making. By April of 1974, Bing (just about to turn 70) was back and teaming with Mitzi Gaynor, Pearl Bailey and Bob Hope.

"Be assured if the program eventuates, we'll be tickled to death to furnish you with tickets if you come to California. Likely it will be taped in August or September, I imagine, if it becomes a reality. Always good to hear from you. Your friend, Bing," he wrote in late May of 1974.

"Now he's so fit I can barely keep up with him on the golf course," wrote Kathryn. "He's given up smoking completely, even his trademark pipe and his after-dinner cigar!"

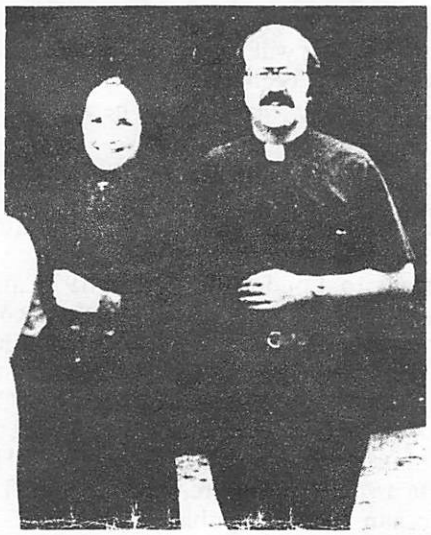
Bing went to London in July of 1975 and began recording fast and furious. Some of the records were done for European distribution where, according to his letters, they sold better than in the United States. He recorded one with Fred Astaire called "A Couple of Song and Dance Men." Bing was 71 and Fred was 76. It was announced that he would reteam with Hope and Lamour in a 9th Road picture, *The Road to Tomorrow.*

Bing began to make public appearances. It really surprised me. Suddenly, he was everywhere. He played Las Vegas. He played L.A. and with wife Kathryn, the children and good friend Rosemary Clooney, he played the Uris Theatre in New York. In October of 1976, he wrote me: "Yes, I think we're going to play in New York at the Uris Theatre. We're working out the details now. Hope that if we do you can arrange to catch the act." Another missed opportunity for me! I kept following his activities with amazement. Record albums were pouring out along with T.V. and public appearances and, of course, his upcoming movie with Hope and Lamour. Then, disaster struck: In March of 1977, while acknowledging a big ovation in Pasadena, Bing fell back into the orchestra pit. It was a 20 foot fall, but he managed to grab a piece of scenery and that saved his life. At first, it seemed the press didn't play up the accident, but then it became apparent that it was quite serious—he had ruptured a disc in his lower back which required considerable treatment and care. With characteristic Crosby style, he downplayed the whole thing and wrote, "So many kind and encouraging words and prayers came during my illness, I just had to get well!" I wondered if that would be the end of the public appearances, but amazingly enough he was soon back on tour, played a two week engagement in London, taped his last Christmas Show, and then headed for Spain to play golf.

On Friday, October 14th, after lunch with the club pro, Bing stepped onto the links at LaMoraleja, outside Madrid, for a round with three of Spain's best golfers. He carded an 85 and won the match by a single stroke. As he walked away from the 19th hole, he suddenly collapsed, fell to the ground, and died of a massive heart attack.

I heard the news while driving to the high school where I was chaplain, and I couldn't believe it. I thought of Gary Crosby's words, "He'll never die. He's like Mount Rushmore!" Within a few hours, I was contacted by the *Kansas City Star,* which ran a subsequent article: "Priest Inspired by Bing's Faith!" A television station interview with me was sandwiched between Geraldo Rivera's report of the funeral and an interview with Bob Hope, who had canceled a public appearance. I certainly didn't represent close friendship, but in many ways, I represented his fans; those who knew the public Bing. Yet in some ways, I felt I had come to know something of the man, as well.

In the summer of 1979, Kathryn Crosby came to Kansas City to play in an outdoor theatre production of



After Bing's death, Kathryn Crosby visited Father Bob in Kansas City where she was appearing in an outdoor theatre production of Guys and Dolls *(1979).*

Guys and Dolls with Hugh O'Brien and Abe Vigoda. She was staying at a downtown hotel with her sister from Texas, and I picked them up and brought them out to my parish for Sunday Mass. We talked about the children and what they were doing, but conversation, of course, drifted to Bing. "Father Bob, you really were special to Bing," she said. "I hope you know that." "Well, that's nice," I thought, "because he is special to me."

As I close, I think of Bob Hope's words at the time of Bing's death: "He represented to Americans and the world, so many qualities we all like to have: warmth, sincerity and a passion for life."

This article originally appeared in the January/February 1984 issue of *American Classic Screen* magazine. It is reprinted with the permission of the author.

Some things have changed since its original publication. Fr. Murphy is no longer Vocation Director for the Diocese. He is pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in St. Joseph, MO and has been for almost eight years.

Al Alberts

PRODUCTIONS

MR. BOB EDELSTEIN
1475 Mt. Holly Road - R-12
Edgewater Park, NJ 08010

Dear Bob:

Many thanks for your letter and for your kind comments.

I remember doing 2 radio shows with Bing. I remember hearing the tapes of the shows, but to my knowledge, they were never transferred to disc. I would certainly love to see it. Again, we'll tape it and send the disc back to you. We'll definitely play it when we receive it.

In answer to your question, Bing was one of the finest performers I've ever had the good fortune to work with. And in addition, a perfect gentle man. Most of the philosophy I have used with people in my career is founded on the few days I was fortunate enough to spend with him.

I'll be waiting for those records Bob, and again, thanks for helping.

Sincerely,

AL ALBERTS

Member Bob Edelstein received this letter from Al Alberts of the original Four Aces. Al has a radio show on a local Philadelphia radio station. Parts applicable to Bing have been reprinted here. Thanks for sharing, Bob!

In Memory of George Burns And His Work With Bing Crosby

By Greg Van Beek

It seems almost inconceivable that George Burns is gone. How can George, the man who was in show business longer than any other person be dead? Can anyone reading this recall a time in his or her life when George wasn't there?—the man who played God in the movies and laughed at the prospect of death by saying, "When the man upstairs knocks on your door, you've got to go. When he knocks on my door, I'm not answering!" Impossible as it may seem, it's true.

Death came peacefully at home on March 9, 1996, just weeks after celebrating his 100th birthday on January 20. Reaching 100 was a goal George was so sure he'd keep that he booked a performance several years in advance at the London Palladium. A nasty fall in his bathtub in July, 1994 (from which he never fully recovered) ended his performing career.

He started his show business career in 1904 at age 8, singing on street corners with a group called the Pee Wee Quartet. He soon entered the vaudeville circuit. In 1923 he met Gracie Allen, and she became his partner in show business and his wife three years later.

Bing first shared the bill with the team of Burns and Allen at the New York Paramount Theater on January 15, 1932. It was Bing's 11th week of a 29-week run at the Paramount. Later that year, Bing starred in his first feature film, *The Big Broadcast*, which also starred George and Gracie. Bing also did a routine with Burns and Allen in a *Hollywood On Parade* short subject to promote the film.

During the next three years (1933-35) Bing co-starred in three more Paramount feature films with Burns and Allen.

Bing made his radio debut on September 2, 1931. The following year Burns and Allen began an 18-year run on radio. They guested on each other's programs several times. Probably the best (and most well-known) appearance together on radio was when George alone guested on Bing's January 14, 1948 show for Philco. On this broadcast Bing "creates" a radio program for George, who wants to become a singer. "Sugar Throat" Burns and Bing perform an hilarious sketch called "The Hour Of Love" and "sing" "It Might As Well Be Spring." This sketch has appeared on several LPs and CDs of the best of Bing on the radio. On Bing's January 21 show George returns as guest and brings Gracie along for another very funny program.

In 1950 George and Gracie switched to television. Bing never appeared on their TV program, but he was a guest on *The Jack Benny Program* in 1954. George met Jack Benny around 1919, and they remained close friends until Jack died in 1974. On Jack's TV show Jack, George and Bing recreate one of George's old vaudeville teams (prior to meeting Gracie). They were known as "Goldie, Fields and Glide."

In 1958 Gracie retired from show business and died in 1964. George was crushed by her death. Every month, religiously, for the next 30 years he visited her grave and talked to her. He continued alone, performing with a night club act, and was a frequent guest on such TV programs as *The Hollywood Palace* (including a couple with Bing in 1965 and 66). As a solo act George never caught on until 1975. That was a turning point in his career.

Bing and Bob Hope originally put in a bid to star in *The Sunshine Boys.* Their bid was rejected. The part eventually went to George Burns and Walter Matthau, but it was only after another blow to George. The part was to have gone to Jack Benny, but he died before shooting began. It was a perfect film role for George. He played an ex-vaudevillian who reunites with his former partner for a TV special. At age 80 George won an Academy Award for Best Supporting actor.

George was soon in demand again as a stand-up comedian. He starred in several more films, including the successful "Oh God" series. He also recorded several albums and had a hit single with the song "I Wish I Was 18 Again" in 1981.

Bing, Jack and George on Jack's TV program of 1954

George Burns was quite shocked and saddened by Bing's death in 1977. He said, "Crosby was an institution. He was the original. The singing style that made him so famous—he made it up. It was his contribution to the world of entertainment. He was a wonderful guy and a great, great singer. He will be missed by the world, and his voice will always be with us. It will live forever."

Of all the many tributes to George, I think the one by Bob Hope sums it up best: "It was hard to

imagine show business before George Burns and now it's hard to imagine it without him. This is one instance where 100 years just wasn't enough."

I couldn't agree more. So long, George. I'm going to miss you.

GEORGE BURNS & BING CROSBY FILMOGRAPHY

1. *The Big Broadcast.* Paramount, 1932.
2. *Hollywood On Parade.* Paramount, 1932 (Short)
3. *College Humor.* Paramount, 1933.
4. *We're Not Dressing.* Paramount, 1934.
5. *The Big Broadcast Of 1936.* Paramount, 1935.

DISCOGRAPHY

20th Century Fox TFM-3106, *My Favorite Story, By America's Greatest Performers* (1963 LP). Bing is M.C. and introduces George's segment.

SELECTED RADIO & TV APPEARANCES

1. *Burns and Allen's Maxwell House Coffee Time,* December 4, 1947. NBC Radio. With guest Bing Crosby.
2. *Philco Radio Time,* January 14, 1948. ABC Radio. Starring Bing Crosby with guest George Burns.
3. *Philco Radio Time,* January 21, 1948. ABC Radio. Starring Bing Crosby with guests George Burns and Gracie Allen.
4. *The Jack Benny Program,* March 21, 1954. CBS TV with guests Bing Crosby and George Burns.
5. *The Hollywood Palace,* January 16, 1965. ABC TV. Host Bing Crosby. Guests include George Burns.
6. *The Hollywood Palace,* September 17, 1966. ABC TV. Host Bing Crosby. Guests include George Burns.
7. *The Bob Hope Comedy Special,* February 17, 1969. NBC TV. With guests Bing Crosby and George Burns.

Memories of Two Good Friends— Dean Martin and Bing Crosby

By Greg Van Beek

Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin at the 1954 Bing Crosby Invitational Tournament

For a lot of people Christmas 1995 was a sad one. It was on Christmas Day that Dean Martin, at age 78, joined Bing Crosby in the heavenly choir, succumbing to acute respiratory failure. He had been suffering health problems for the last several years.

He was born Dino Paul Crocetti on June 7, 1917 in Steubenville, Ohio. He started out in his late teens as a boxer ("Kid Crocket"), but soon began a singing career around the midwest. By the early forties he was a regular at New York City night spots, under the name Dino Martini. Many people influenced his singing style, including Harry Mills of the Mills Brothers, but it was Bing who had the biggest impact on him. Dean once said, "I copied Bing until I had a style of my own." It's easy to hear Bing's crooning style of the thirties in his delivery.

In 1946 fate stepped in and gave Dean the boost he needed. Fate's name was Jerry Lewis. The zany pair was signed by Paramount Pictures in 1949, and their popularity rivaled that of Bing and Bob Hope. In fact Martin

Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis (1954 photo)

and Lewis have a cameo appearance in the last of Paramount's "Road" films, *Road to Bali,* in 1952. Citing creative differences, Martin and Lewis parted company in 1956.

Following the break-up Dean joined forces with Frank Sinatra's "Rat Pack," which also included Sammy Davis, Jr., Peter Lawford and Joey Bishop. Bing, while not into the "party scene" as were the others, was also a member. The "Rat Pack" made several very successful films in the early sixties. Bing starred with them in their last collaboration, *Robin And The Seven Hoods.* Bing had more or less a supporting role, a self-deprecating parody of himself, but his songs stole the show.

In 1965 Dean launched his own TV variety show. *The Dean Martin Show* became enormously popular and ran until 1974. NBC made Dean its highest-paid star. Bing guested on the show four times during its nine-year run. On one show Dean introduced Bing by saying, "Here's the best friend a song ever had."

Dean Martin was quite saddened by the death of his old friend Bing in 1977. In a statement to the press he said, "Any singer who approaches a microphone has to pass through Bing Crosby's shadow first."

In 1978 Dean recorded an album called *Once In A While.* With such tracks as "Twilight On The Trail," "Without A Word Of Warning," "Love Thy Neighbor," "The Day You Came Along" and the title cut, it's quite evident he meant it as a tribute to his mentor.

Dean continued performing well into the eighties, almost always in Las Vegas. But in 1987 he suffered the tragic loss of his son, Dino, Jr., in a plane crash. It was a blow from which Dean would never recover. He seemed to give up on life from that point on.

In 1988 Dean reunited with fellow "Rat-Packers" Frank Sinatra and Sammy Davis, Jr. for a concert tour. Ill health forced Dean to bow out after only a few performances. He became something of a recluse from then until the time of his death, venturing out only to a favorite Beverly Hills Italian restaurant almost every night. It was, in a sense, a sad ending to a star who brought joy to millions through his many talents.

Bing once said, "This boy is as loose as ashes, but what he does is mighty nice and mighty pleasant." And so he was—and is—mighty pleasant indeed. He will be missed. As Irving Berlin wrote, "The Song Is Ended, But The Melody Lingers On."

BING CROSBY AND DEAN MARTIN

On Radio

1. The Martin and Lewis Show, 10/19/51. NBC. With guest Bing Crosby.
2. The Bing Crosby Show For Chesterfield, 11/7/51. CBS. With guests Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis.

On Television

1. The Eddie Fisher Show, 9/30/58. NBC. With guests Bing Crosby, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis.
2. The Bing Crosby Show for Oldsmobile, 10/1/58. ABC. With guests Dean Martin and Patti Page.
3. The Dean Martin Show, 11/22/58. NBC. With guests Bing Crosby and Phil Harris.
4. The Bing Crosby Show for Oldsmobile, 3/2/59. ABC. Cameo appearance by Dean Martin.
5. The Dean Martin Show, 3/19/59. NBC. Bing is a brief guest.
6. The Frank Sinatra Timex Show, 10/19/59. ABC. With guests Bing Crosby and Dean Martin.
7. The Bing Crosby Show, 1/15/64. NBC. Dean joins Frank Sinatra and Bing for a song.
8. The Dean Martin Show, 4/13/67. NBC. Bing guests with Rowan and Martin.
9. The Dean Martin Show, 10/19/67. NBC. Bing guests with Lena Horne.
10. The Dean Martin Show, 11/6/69. NBC. Bing guests with Eva Gabor.
11. Bing Crosby--Cooling It, 4/13/70. NBC. Dean guests.
12. The Dean Martin Show, 10/7/71. NBC. Bing guests w/Rip Taylor.
13. The Paul Anka Special, 4/25/77. Network unknown. Bing, Dean and others sing "My Way."

On Film

1. *Road To Bali.* Paramount, 1952. Cameos by Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis.
2. *Scared Stiff.* Paramount, 1953. Bing and Bob Hope have cameos in this Martin and Lewis film.
3. *The Road To Hong Kong.* United Artists, 1962. Cameos by Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra.
4. *Robin And The Seven Hoods.* Warner Bros., 1964. Bing co-stars w/Dean, Frank Sinatra, and Sammy Davis, Jr.

On Records

1. "Fugue For Tinhorns" Bing, Dean and Frank Sinatra, 7/29/63. 45: Reprise R-20217. LP: Harmony HS-11374, Reprise F/FS-2016, 4F-2019, *Guys And Dolls.*
2. "The Oldest Established Permanent Floating Crap Game" Bing, Dean and Frank Sinatra, 7/29/63. 45: Reprise R-20217. LP: Harmony HS-11374, Reprise F/FS-2016, 4F-2019, *Guys and Dolls.*
3. "Style" Bing, Dean and Frank Sinatra, 4/10/64. LP: Reprise F/FS-2021, *Robin And The Seven Hoods.*
4. "Mister Booze" Bing, Dean, Frank Sinatra and Sammy Davis, Jr., 4/10/64. LP: Reprise F/FS-2021, *Robin And The Seven Hoods.*
5. "Don't Be A Do-Badder" Bing, Dean, Frank Sinatra and Sammy Davis, Jr., 4/10/64. LP: Reprise F/FS-2021, *Robin And The Seven Hoods.*
6. "The Bathtub Scene" TV sketch w/Bing, Dean and Frank Sinatra, April 64. LP: Vic. LOC/LSO-1090, *Les Poupées de Paris.*

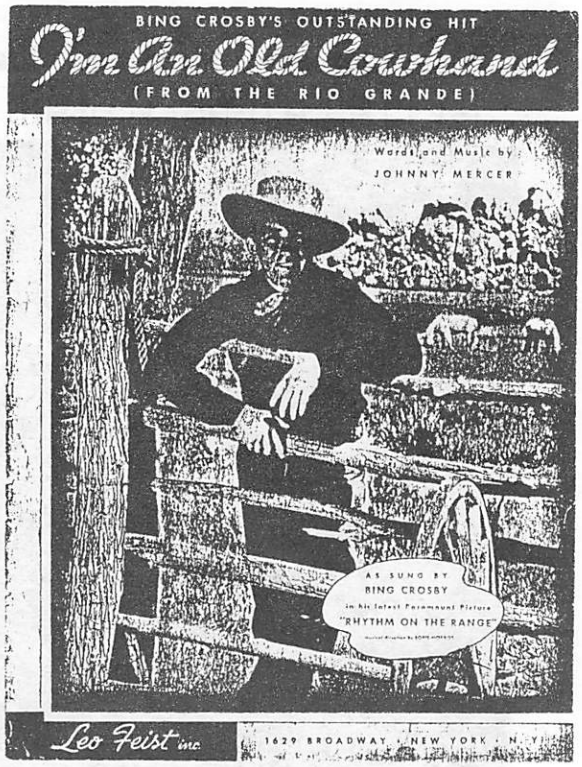
Your 1936 Hit Parade

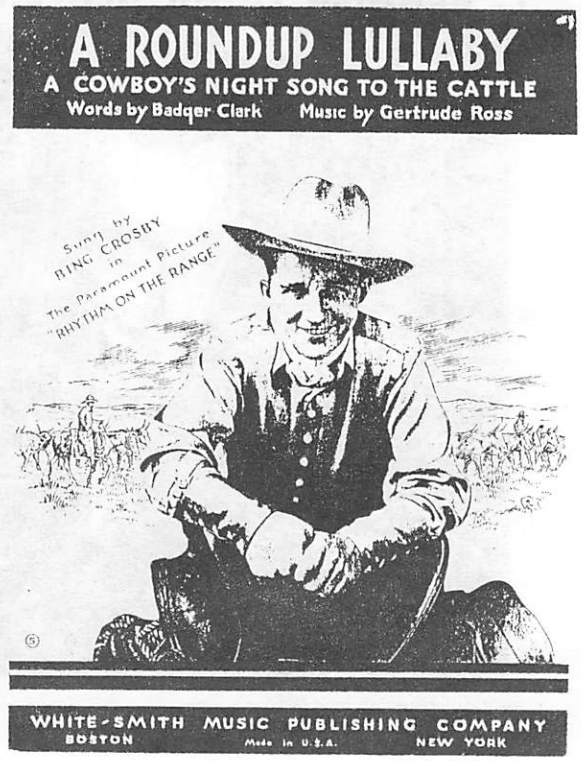
By Mark Scrimger

1936 wasn't a particularly prolific year for Bing recording-wise. However, what was lost in quantity was more than made up for in quality as the listing below shows. The Hawaiian and western songs were both recently reissued on CDs, some 60 years after their initial waxings—a testament to their enduring popularity. The movie titles are timeless Crosby classics that show why Bing was, and still is, an entertainer without peer.

RECORDINGS MADE IN 1936

24 Mar.	We'll rest at the end of the trail	DLA 306-A
24 Mar.	Twilight on the trail	DLA 307-A
24 Mar.	Twilight on the trail	DLA 307-B
24 Mar.	Twilight on the trail	DLA 307-A-D
24 Mar.	The touch of your lips	DLA 308-A
24 Mar.	The touch of your lips	DLA 308-C
24 Mar.	Lovely lady	DLA 309-A
24 Mar.	Lovely lady	DLA 309-B
29 Mar.	Would you? (Brown, Freed)	DLA 322-A
29 Mar.	Would you? (Brown, Freed)	DLA 322-B
29 Mar.	Robins and roses	DLA 323-A
29 Mar.	I got plenty of nuttin'	DLA 324-A
29 Mar.	I got plenty of nuttin'	DLA 324-B
29 Mar.	It ain't necessarily so	DLA 325-A
29 Mar.	It ain't necessarily so	DLA 325-D
29 Mar.	Robins and roses (parody)	DLA 326
14 July	Empty saddles	DLA 436-A
14 July	Roundup lullaby	DLA 437-A
17 July	I can't escape from you	DLA 440-A
17 July	The house Jack built for Jill	DLA 441-A
17 July	The house Jack built for Jill	DLA 441-B
17 July	I'm an old cowhand	DLA 442-A
23 July	Song of the islands	DLA 452-A
23 July	Aloho oe	DLA 453-A
24 July	So do I	DLA 462-A
24 July	Pennies from heaven	DLA 463-A
29 July	Let's call a heart a heart	DLA 478-A
29 July	One, two, button your shoe	DLA 479-A
4 Aug.	Shoe shine boy	DLA 521-A
4 Aug.	Shoe shine boy	DLA 521-B
4 Aug.	South sea island magic	DLA 522-A
4 Aug.	South sea island magic	DLA 522-B
4 Aug.	Hawaiian paradise	DLA 523-A
4 Aug.	Hawaiian paradise	DLA 523-B
10 Aug.	For love alone	DLA 550-A
10 Aug.	I never realised	DLA 551-A
10 Aug.	I never realised	DLA 551-B
10 Aug.	Beyond compare	DLA 552-A
12 Aug.	Dear old girl	DLA 554-A
12 Aug.	Just one word of consolation	DLA 555-A
17 Aug.	So do I (medley. Part I)	DLA 579-A
17 Aug.	Pennies from heaven (medley. Part 2)	DLA 580-A
19 Aug.	The way you look tonight	DLA 587-A
19 Aug.	A fine romance	DLA 588-A
19 Aug.	Me and the moon	DLA 589-A





Because of the variety of composers and publishing companies drawn upon to compile the score of *Rhythm On The Range,* a collection of sheet music covers from the film escapes the sameness usually found when only one firm handles the publishing. There are no losers in this foursome.

PENNIES FROM HEAVEN

LET'S CALL A HEART A HEART

Note for note, these four songs from *Pennies From Heaven* rank among some of Bing's finest work and show what inspired the formation of ***Club Crosby*** way back in 1936 to celebrate a great man and his music.

SO DO I

ONE, TWO, BUTTON YOUR SHOE

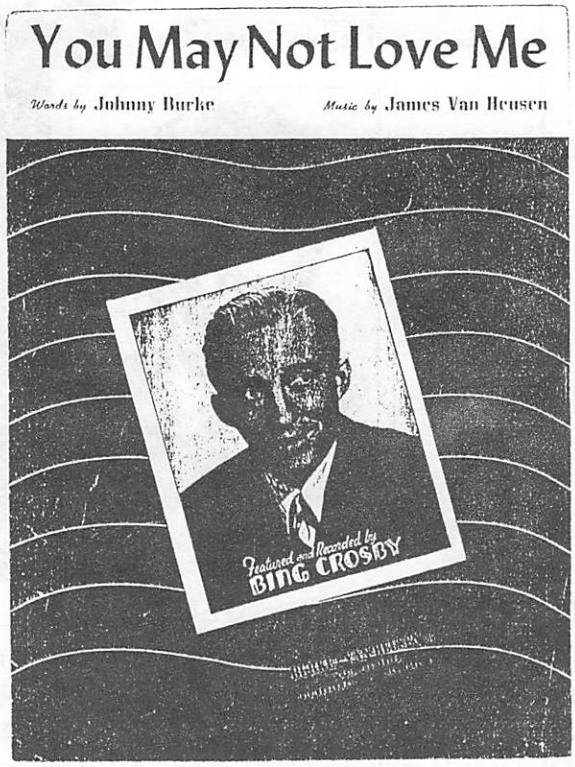
Bing made an unsuccessful attempt to renew an old hit-making partnership when he recorded this 1936 Harry Barris tune, "Beyond Compare." Although it was cut from the film, Bing still made a nice Decca recording of "The House Jack Built For Jill."

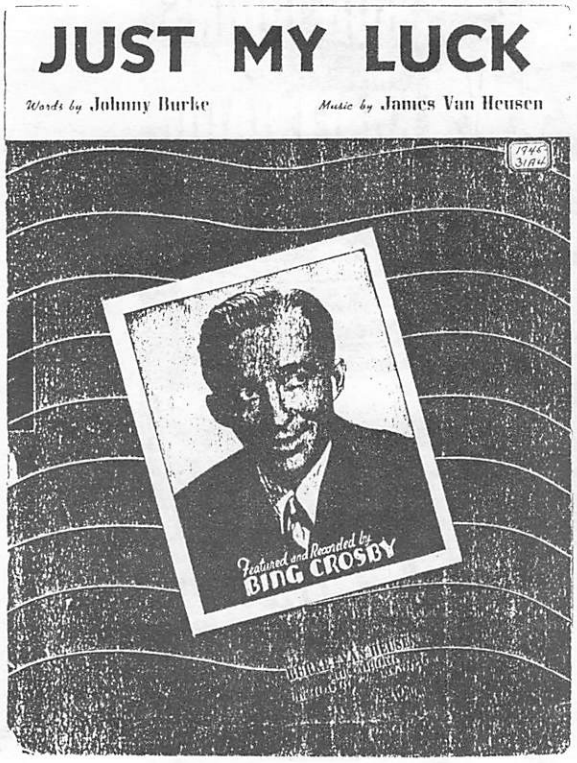
This 9 x 11 inch grocery store display card advertising Miracle Whip Salad Dressing features a scene from *Rhythm On The Range* and mentions the Kraft Radio Show twice. Bing's radio and movie co-star, Bob Burns, was on hand to help Bing peddle his wares in 1936.

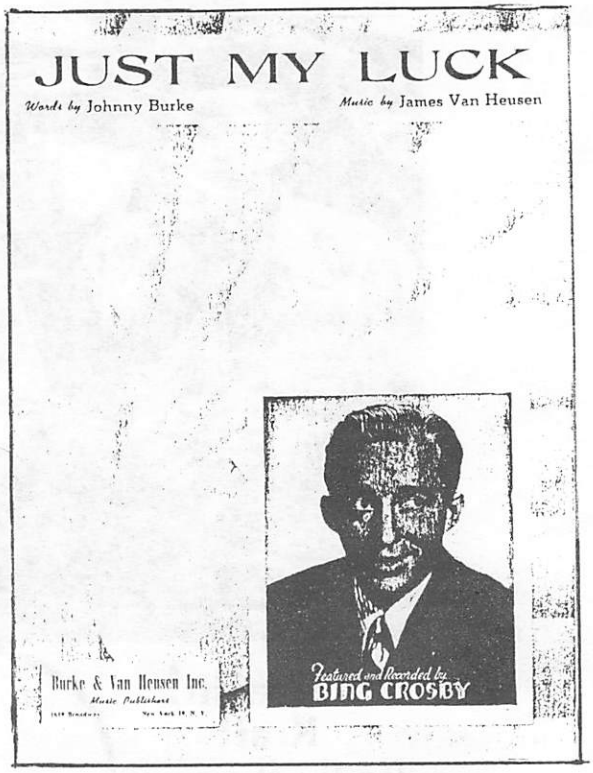
...And Your 1946 Flop Parade

Partly out of friendship and partly because of the potential financial rewards, Bing was persuaded to invest $150,000 in the Burke-Van Heusen musical *Nelly Bly,* which opened on Broadway on January 21, 1946. It closed after only nine performances—a noted Broadway flop which was a bitter disappointment to all concerned. Bing recorded this pair of songs from the show, but it mattered not. As you can see, the sheet music makes no mention at all of their connection to this ill-fated production. No explanation for the two different covers for "Just My Luck."

For those interested, Nelly Bly was the pen name of Elizabeth Cochrane, a reporter for the *New York World,* who was famous for her successful 1889-90 attempt to duplicate the trip described in Jules Verne's novel *Around The World In 80 Days.* Bing's 1956 recording of this movie's theme song was infinitely more successful than either of these two songs, and Mike Todd's production is the one he should have invested in. M.S.







Bing in Hollywood

By David Lobosco

"Blue Skies"

(Paramount, 1946)

As hard as it is to believe that Club Crosby is 60 years old, it is even harder to imagine that the movie *Blue Skies* has now had its 50th birthday. Most of the film, in my opinion, is as fresh in 1996 as it was in 1946. With the war finally over, audiences were still flocking to the movies. The year 1946 would be the most successful year for studios until 1989. And those millions of people were flocking to see Bing Crosby, of course!

Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire were reunited on film four years after their *Holiday Inn* hit (1942). Paul Draper, whom I've never heard of, was first considered for Astaire's role. The female lead, which went to Joan Caulfield, was first suggested as a role for Ginger Rogers. She declined, not wanting to be Astaire's dancing partner again. (They would dance together one more time on film in *Barkleys Of Broadway* in 1949). Bing was also reunited with comedian Billy DeWolfe. They had starred together in *Dixie* (1943).

In *Blue Skies* Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire play former vaudeville partners who compete for the same Broadway actress (Joan Caulfield). First she loves Bing. Then she loves Astaire. And then she loves Bing again. Talk about your fickle ladies! Joan ends up marrying Bing, but even though they have a child together their marriage fizzles. The problem is that Bing seems to love his nightclubs more than his wife. After they divorce, Joan goes back to Fred and plans to marry him. However, once again, she realizes that her heart only beats for Bing, and she cancels the wedding. This causes Fred to get drunk before a performance, and while dancing to "Heat Wave" he falls off the stage, which cripples him for life. Joan feels that she has ruined Bing and Fred's lives, so she leaves the country. However, love is a powerful thing, and Bing and Joan are reunited on a radio show.

Even though many people may consider this story corny or dated by 1996 standards, I personally enjoyed the movie—including the story. However, I think that Irving Berlin's songs were the main attraction, expertly performed by Bing and Fred. A total of 21 Berlin songs can be heard in the film, 15 of which were recorded by Bing sometime in his career. The personal standouts for me were Bing's version of the Oscar-nominated "You Keep Coming Back Like A Song" and "Getting Nowhere," a touching lullaby. Fred had intended this to be his Hollywood swan song, and he put everything into his performance. (He would return to movies to replace Gene Kelly in *Easter Parade* in 1948.) Fred's version of "Puttin' On The Ritz" would become a cinematic classic, and many people came to believe that Fred had introduced it. In reality, Astaire was the third person to sing it in the movies. Harry Richman introduced it in 1930, and Clark Gable sang it in 1939.

Blue Skies, Bing's third movie in color, would go on to be the biggest musical of 1946, and that year saw Bing as the number-one star for the third year in a row. It is a movie that could turn anyone's gray skies to blue, and I'm sure that for 1946 audiences it did just that. Just watching it—50 years later—does the trick for me. Thanks again, Bing!

Announcing
A Bing Crosby
Home on the Internet

Set your Web Browser to:

http://www.kcmetro.cc.mo.us/pennvalley/biology/lewis/crosby/bing.htm

Developed and maintained by Steven Lewis.
Your comments and criticisms are welcome.

BING CROSBY

The Going My Way Star in Rancho Santa Fe

The seventh article in Caroline Dawson's series on Bing's residences.

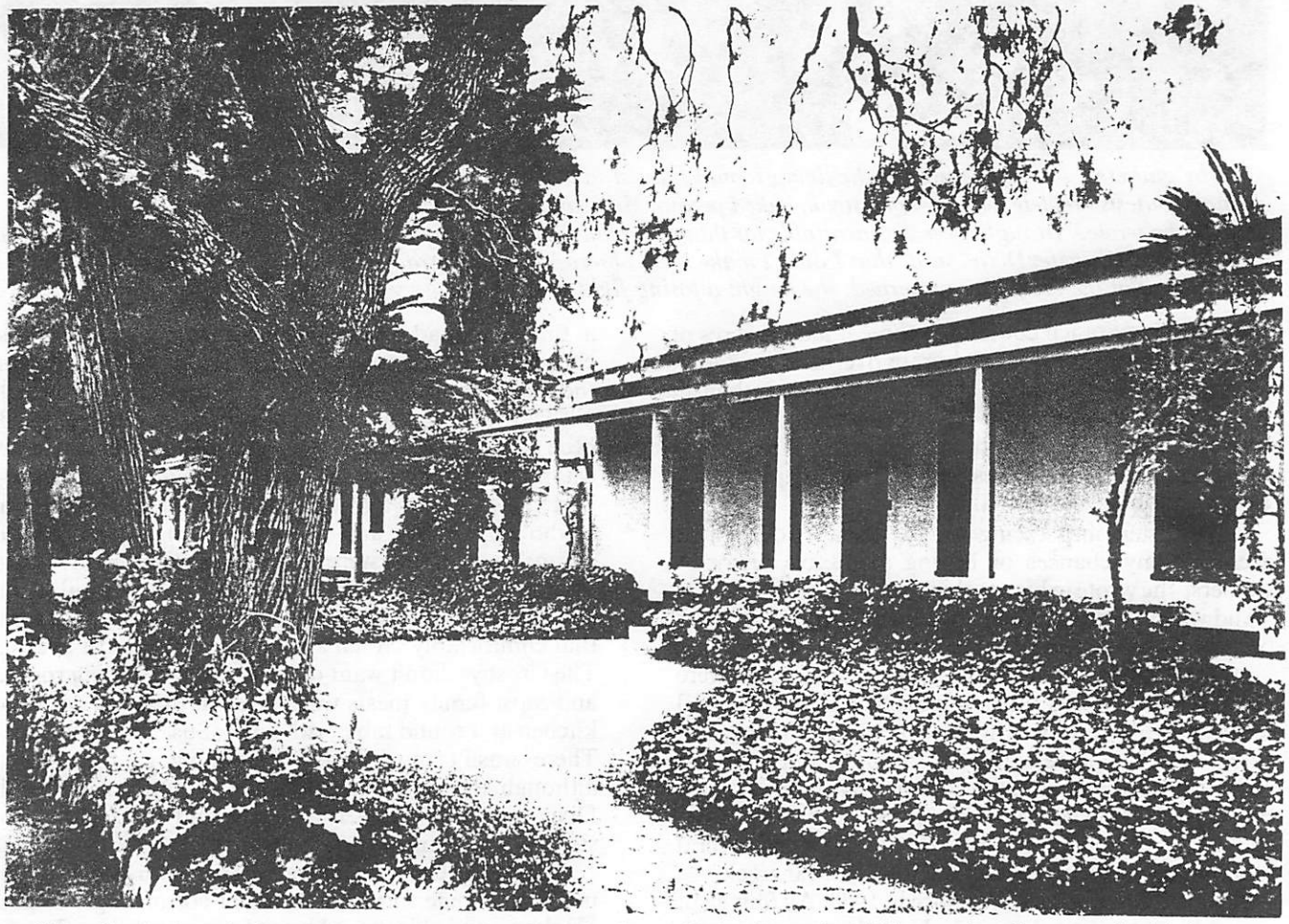
TEXT BY ANNE EDWARDS

"Dear Ev, Cancel all contracts. I gave all I had and it's no good," Bing Crosby wrote his older brother and manager, Everett, moments after he completed his first solo radio performance on September 2, 1931. Everett did nothing of the sort. The program turned out to be a smashing success. Film offers followed, and before long Crosby was signed by Paramount to star in *The Big Broadcast* (1932), with George Burns and Gracie Allen. No one could have been more surprised than Crosby—unless it was his father-in-law, who had told his daughter, singer-actress Dixie Lee, at the time of her wedding in 1930 that Crosby was a useless, good-for-nothing type" and that she was making a big mistake.

Dixie Lee was a soft-spoken southern lady, more enthusiastic about having a home and starting a family than about pursuing a career. And so with her husband under contract to Paramount and a steady income guaranteed, she quit show business and the young Crosbys went in search of a home that would be a good place to raise children. They ended up with two houses: one in the San Fernando Valley so that Crosby could commute to the studio, and a weekend country place about five miles from Del Mar in an area called Rancho Santa Fe, an inland community of about four hundred year-round residents twenty miles north of San Diego. Because of its magnificent position overlooking the Pacific, Del Mar's summer population greatly increased, and—part of the attraction for Crosby—big-name bands came to the local hotel to perform.

By the time the Crosbys' first son, Gary, was born in 1933, the house in Rancho Santa Fe had become much more than a weekend retreat. Situated on sixty-five acres, it was almost completely hidden by eucalypti, date palms and pepper trees. One section, originally called the Second Osuna Adobe, had been built in 1834. The rambling one-story adobe had been reconstructed and enlarged in 1910, but the white posts of the original wraparound porch and the low reveals of the windows remained to display the house's Mexican origin. The Second Osuna Adobe had been a Mexican headquarters in the 1846 war with the United States, and its owner had been the first alcalde of San Diego under Mexican rule. The Crosbys had bought a piece of American history—and they were soon to expand it.

Rancho Santa Fe was also home to several large haciendas, among them Douglas Fairbanks's three-



Bing Crosby bought his 65-acre compound in Rancho Santa Fe in the early 1930s as a headquarters for his horse-racing enterprise at the nearby Del Mark track. He modernized and moved into the 100-year-old "rambling Spanish adobe," adding a new wing with authentic three-foot-thick clay walls.

Crosby gathered golf competitors at the living room's harvest table for tournament dinner parties and, on occasion, eating contests--replete with "T-bone steak, baked potato, Mexican beans, salad, bread and butter, and apple pie a la mode," he wrote. "Draught beer was available for those who fancied it." But for their four sons, the Crosbys tolerated no such excess. His wife, Dixie, said "that I didn't make them observe the social graces," he wrote. "As far as their deportment at the table was concerned, she fought a losing fight."

thousand-acre ranch containing three hundred acres of Valencia oranges and an elaborate overhead irrigation system. Crosby was more interested in horses than in agriculture. Producer Hal Roach had talked him into investing in the Santa Anita racetrack, and Crosby had also purchased a half interest in a racehorse named Black Forest. Soon he had a small stable.

"I'd gotten into racing on the cheap side, which decreased my chances of having a notable array of winners," he wrote in his autobiography, *Call Me Lucky*. "And when Hope began to kid me about it on the air, it became legend that my horses were dogs."

By the time his twin sons, Dennis and Philip, were born in 1935, Crosby was a huge star in film, radio and recordings. A bond had formed between Crosby and Bob Hope, who were both at Paramount and often did radio shows together. Now deeply involved in horse breeding, Crosby was also drawn to the "front office" end of racing, and in 1935 he, Gary Cooper and several other partners broke ground for the Del Mar track.

A fourth son Lindsay, was born in 1938. All four slept in one large room at the ranch. First there were cherrywood cribs, fastidiously lined up. In time these were turned in for bunk beds. The boys' room was spartan: Toys were allowed to be taken from a large chest one at a time and had to be returned before another was chosen. With four active little boys so close in age, it was the only way that Dixie felt she could keep any order at all. The first additions and renovations to the house had been made during the period when the Craftsman style was popular in southern California. The couple modernized the property and enlarged it to accommodate a studio for Crosby and a family room that housed a piano. The windows were low; ceilings in the main rooms were open beamed. There was a long harvest table on one side of the uncluttered, unpretentious living room that comfortably sat ten and could stretch to fit twelve. The Crosbys didn't want or have a formal dining room, and most family meals were eaten in the large country kitchen at a round table with a lazy Susan in the center. There wasn't much real entertaining at the ranch, although the clan did gather around the piano, and Dixie, who had a lovely voice, would be coaxed into singing with Bing.

Dixie Lee Crosby decorated the room herself with maple and pine furniture, braided cotton rugs, bright ginghams and chintz, and brass hurricane lamps. It was a house that invited casual living. Tables were left sparsely adorned to prevent valuable pieces from falling prey to the often obstreperous young boys. Outside,

there was a pool enclosed by a five-foot wire fence to keep the children from wandering in unattended.

"We were [pictured to the public]," Gary Crosby wrote, as "the Crooner's very own Katzenjammer Kids, lovable little roughnecks who had the old man climbing the walls from our mischief." But Gary claimed his father was a strict disciplinarian and that the boys hopped gingerly when he gave them what for. "Dad usually made it clear. . .that however much he tolerated our occasional cheekiness, he very definitely maintained the upper hand."

Bing Crosby wanted his kids to know that "there was another way of life outside of Hollywood." The boys were not part of the celebrity-offspring social circuit. They went to a small Catholic day school in North Hollywood and kept pretty much to themselves at the ranch, although they had marvelous grounds to play on, the horses to visit and, when they were supervised, the pool to splash about and swim in.

During the war Crosby's career went into top gear with his first film with Hope, *Road to Singapore* (1940), followed by *If I Had My Way* and *Rhythm on the River* the same year, *Road to Zanzibar* (1941), *Holiday Inn* (1942), *Road to Morocco* (1942) and culminating, in 1944, in his Academy Award-winning performance as Father O'Malley in *Going My Way*.

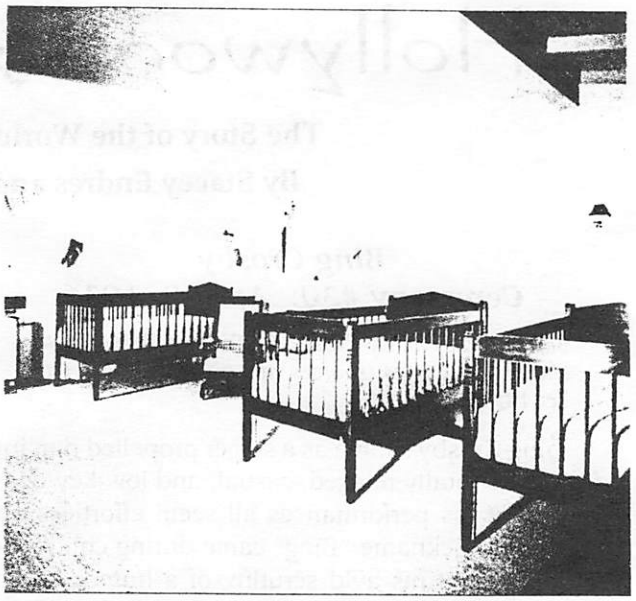
"Gary Cooper was chosen to hand me the award," Crosby later wrote. "I don't remember what he said, but when he managed to put the idea over to me that I had won the award, a great warm feeling came over me. I stumbled up on the stage like a zombie. . . .I asked, 'Are you talking about me?' And he said, 'Yup.' "

When writer-director Leo McCarey had first come to Crosby with the idea of playing a priest, he was skeptical. "Now what kind of a priest could I play?" Crosby asked. "I'd be unbelievable, and besides, the church won't like that kind of casting."

There was some criticism of the way Crosby's portrayal of the easygoing father "humanized" the priesthood. But the general public and even Pope Pius XII applauded Crosby's Father O'Malley, whom he would play again in *The Bells of St. Mary's* (1945).

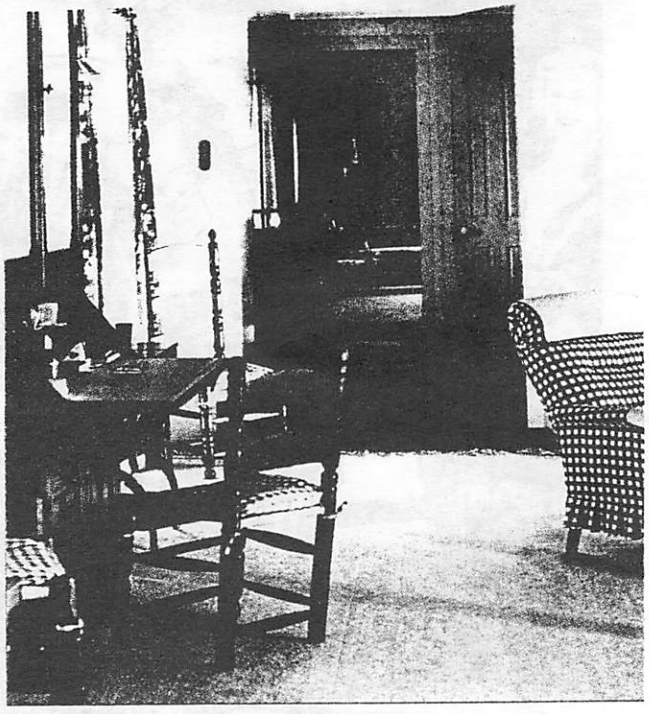
It had taken several years to make a successful enterprise of the Del Mar track, and by the time *Going My Way* was released, Crosby's venture into racetrack proprietorship had become too great a pressure. Part of the problem was the short racing season—July and August—because of the area's heavy winter rains, which turned the track into a muddy quagmire. This was also true of the golf course that had been constructed nearby. To add to his difficulties, it was hard to get racehorse owners to bring their good horses to Del Mar. Crosby, with Hope's help, had slogged away on publicity gimmicks, inaugurating celebrity golf competitions and other devices to lure customers until, by 1945, Del Mar had become such an attraction that fifty thousand people crammed into the area daily during the season. The once sleepy quality of the town was lost in a boom of commercialism.

Crosby was already planning to sell his interest in the racetrack—as well as his house and ranch and most of his horses—when he went in search of a new home where his family could live a more normal life away from the glare of the public. And so one February day in 1944, when Gary was ten, his father summoned him into his office to tell him that he had bought a large, far more



Though Crosby appeared with such luminaries as Bix Beiderbecke and Duke Ellington, and went on to make as many as four movies a year with Paramount, his home was relatively simple. The boys slept in an orderly line of cribs.

rustic ranch in Elko, Nevada, in the northeast corner of the state. The two of them, he announced, were going to spend the summer there roughing it without the rest of the family, as he believed the rugged conditions would help build his son's character.



Eventually, Elko became the Crosbys' summer spread. The years in Rancho Santa Fe were over, but Crosby's decade-long residence had added a new chapter to the history of Del Mar.

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST *of April 1996. It has been reprinted, without editorial changes, by permission. The text has been reset and is complete; not all pictures and captions have been reproduced.*

Hollywood At Your Feet

The Story of the World-Famous Chinese Theatre
By Stacey Endres and Robert Cushman (1992)

Bing Crosby
Ceremony #30: April 8, 1936

Born: Harry Lillis Crosby in Tacoma, Washington, circa May 2, 1904 (sources vary on year). Died: October 14, 1977.

Bing Crosby's fame as a singer propelled him into films. His totally relaxed, casual, and low-key delivery made his performances all seem effortless and easy. The nickname "Bing" came during childhood, as a result of his avid scrutiny of a humor feature entitled the "Bingville Bugle" in the Sunday edition of the Spokane *Spokesman Review*.

His mother hoped he would become a lawyer, but the music profession lured him, and he left college in 1921 to join a band as a drummer. By 1925 he had begun singing and headed for Los Angeles with his partner, Al Rinker, whose sister, singer Mildred Bailey, got them bookings on the Fanchon and Marco vaudeville circuit. They were billed as "Two Boys and a Piano." Paul Whiteman caught their act in 1926. Then the two joined his orchestra with a third partner, Harry Barris, and were thereafter known as "The Rhythm Boys."

Crosby made his film debut in a short subject for Pathé, "Two Plus Fours" (1930), and got his first network radio contract at $600 a week with CBS in 1931. An overnight sensation, Bing's national fame led to a contract with Paramount in 1932, an association that was to last nearly twenty-five years.

In 1940 Bing teamed with Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour for *Road to Singapore*. Subsequent "Road" pictures led to *Zanzibar* (1941), *Morocco* (1942), *Utopia* (1946), *Rio* (1947), *Bali* (1952), and *Hong Kong* (1962).

Crosby introduced "White Christmas" in *Holiday Inn* (1942). The song won the Academy Award and sold a miraculous 30,000,000 copies—the biggest-selling single record of the century. Throughout his film career, Crosby continued regularly on radio and later, television.

His motion picture credits include *The Big Broadcast* (1932), *We're Not Dressing* (1934), *Waikiki Wedding* (1937), ***Going My Way* (1944), **The Bells of St. Mary's* (1945), *Blue Skies* (1946), *Here Comes the Groom* (1951), **The Country Girl* (1954), *High Society* (1956), and *Stagecoach* (1966, final film).

* *Academy Award nomination: Best Actor.*

** *Academy Award winner: Best Actor.*

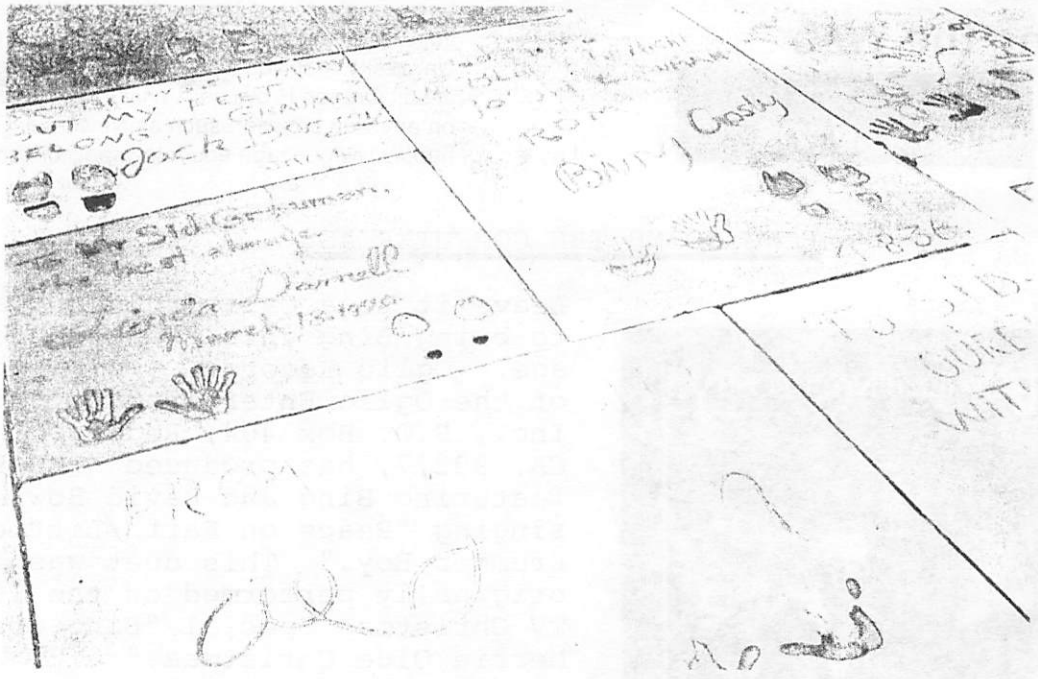
Bing Crosby (center), in full costume for his role in the motion picture Rhythm on the Range (1936), and cement artist Jean W. Klossner.

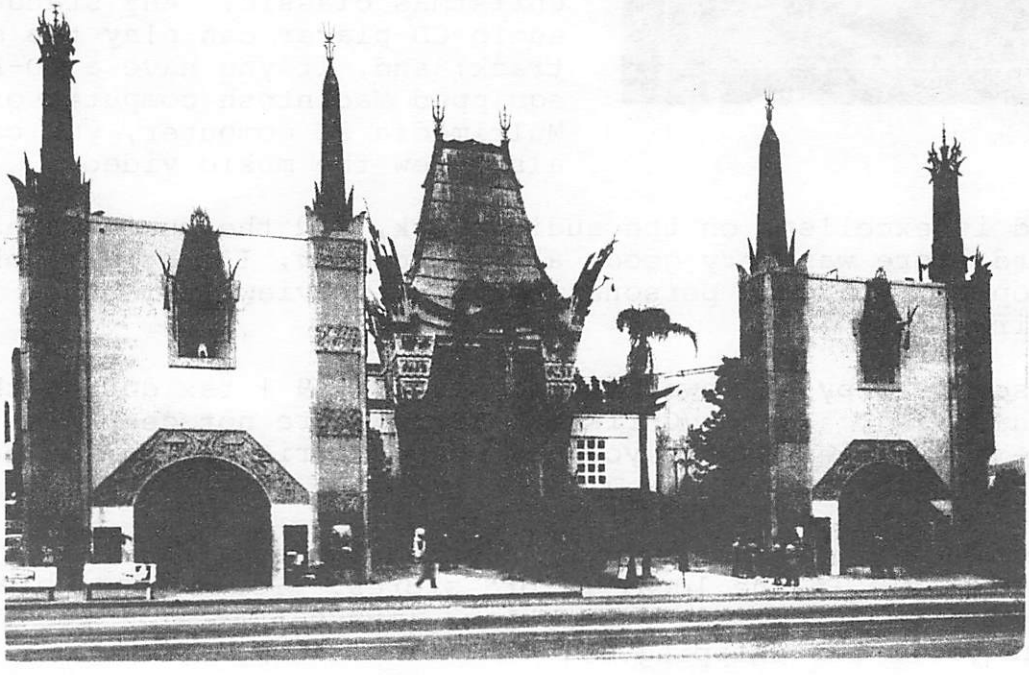
Crosby's square is tinted red and contains the inscription "To Sid Grauman from Bing Crosby [signature]." Also included are the date ("4-8-36."), his two footprints (made with boots), two handprints, and his signature, plus a drawing of three bars of music from the song "Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day," with an abbreviated title ("The Blue of The Night") written beneath the bars of music in the cement.

Crosby drew a musical staff with a treble clef, a time signature of three-quarter time (or waltz time), and even included the sign to repeat the chorus ("||:"). The song is written in the key of G major, and Crosby drew the notes (G, A, B, A, G, and F#) for the lyric that begins the chorus "Where the blue of the night." The notes contain the proper stems with and without flags. Notes G, A, A, and G are eighth notes; and notes B and F# are half notes. (The note-heads of the eighth notes are not filled in as they should be, due to the fact that working in cement is more difficult than one would think!)

The 1931 song had become Crosby's trademark, originating as the theme of his popular radio show, "Fifteen Minutes with Bing Crosby," for Cremo Cigars. The music was composed by Fred E. Ahlert, and the lyric written was by Roy Turk and Bing Crosby.

The song title had been similarly abbreviated in a short subject Crosby made for Mack Sennett in 1933 entitled "Blue of the Night."





BINGsings

By Charles Baillie

NEWS FOR COMPUTER BUFFS FROM GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

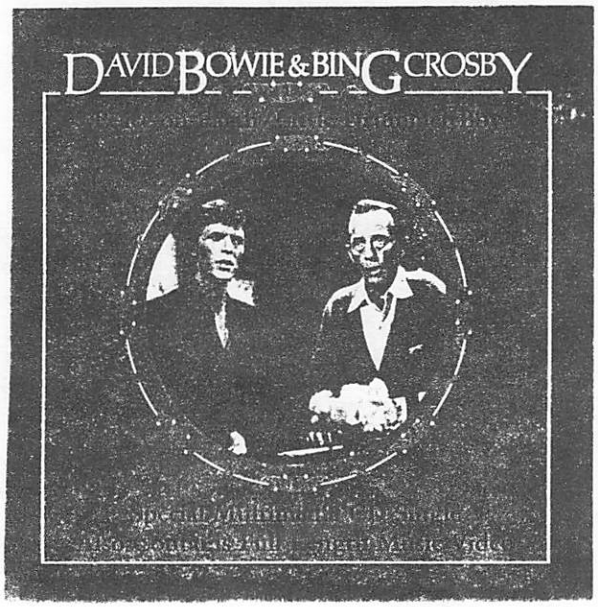
The University goes live on Internet web with a "special collections" Home Page. One of the items to be featured is the "Bing Crosby Collection." Pat Sullivan, former President of Club Crosby, has been trying to generate interest in getting material on Bing on the Internet. Perhaps this is a place to start, Pat.

Special Collections Goes Live on the Web

http://www.gonzaga.edu

Special Collections home page gives a thorough listing of the various collections such as the James O'Sullivan Collection, the University Archives, the Bing Crosby Collection, and the Jesuit Oregon Province Archives. One can view this page on any web browser, such as Netscape. The address is: http://www.gonzaga.edu/foley/speccoll.html.

BING JOINS THE COMPUTER AGE



Leave it to a California company to bring Bing into the computer age. Oglio Records, a division of the Oglio Entertainment Group, Inc., P.O. Box 404, Redondo Beach, CA, 90277, has produced a CD-ROM featuring Bing and David Bowie singing "Peace on Earth/Little Drummer Boy." This duet was originally performed on the 1977 TV Christmas Special "Bing Crosby's Merrie Olde Christmas."

The disc contains both the standard full-length audio version and the full length music video of this Christmas classic. Any standard audio CD player can play the music track; and, if you have a CD-Rom equipped Macintosh computer or a Multimedia PC computer, you can also view the music video.

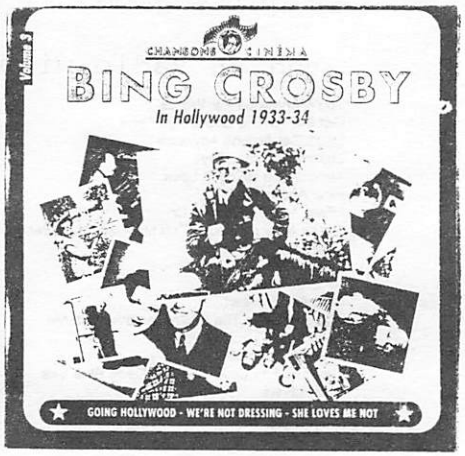
The sound is excellent on the audio track, and the music video in the record store was very good, also. However, I'm still looking for a properly equipped personal computer to view it in the home environment.

I purchased my copy at Tower Records for $7.99 + tax during the Christmas season. As the Christmas records are not generally available after the season, you may wish to write to Oglio Records if you are interested.

Two additional Christmas records appeared in December, but are no longer available in the local record stores. You may be able to order them from Stash Mail Order, Inc. (1-800-666-5277) for $7.98 each plus $5.95 for shipping.

Bing Crosby "Christmas Thru the Years" -- CD-LLT-12532
Bing & Frank Sinatra "Christmas with Bing & Frank" -- CD-PILZ-64914

Stash Mail Order, in their Christmas catalog, lists these three French imports @ $18.98 each plus shipping. I purchased mine at Tower Records @ $17.99 + tax, but they are "sold out" and do not intend to re-order. The sound is good; and, while most of the numbers have appeared on CD, there are ten songs new to compact disc.



Bing Crosby (3CD Set) — **Chansons Cinema CIN 012** — **France**

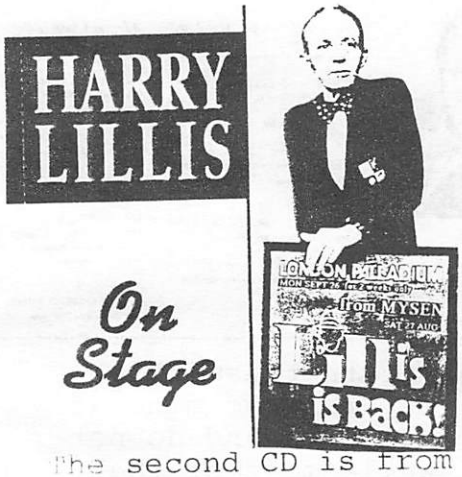
Vol. 1 CIN 009
Bing Crosby With Paul Whiteman & His Orchestra
Constantinople
Get Out And Get Under The Moon
'Tain't So Honey 'Tain't So
I'd Rather Cry Over You
I'm On A Crest Of A Wave
That's My Weakness Now
Because My Baby Don't Mean Maybe Now
Out O' Town Gal
I'm Bringing A Red Red Rose - Non Bing
Coquette
Reaching For Someone
Sposin'
At Twilight
When You're Counting The Stars Alone
I'm A Dreamer Arn't We All
A Bundle Of Old Love Letters

Vol. 2 CIN 010
Bing Crosby In Hollywood 1930-1933
THE KING OF JAZZ 1930
Happy Feet
A Bench In The Park w Brox Sisters
A Bench In The Park
It Happened In Monterey - Non Bing
I Like To Do Things For You
Ragamuffin Romeo - Non Bing
So The Bluebirds And The Blackbirds Got Together
Song Of The Dawn
THE BIG BROADCAST 1932
Dinah w Mills Bros.
Please
Here Lies Love
COLLEGE HUMOR 1933
Learn To Croon
Moonstruck
Down The Old Ox Road
TOO MUCH HARMONY 1933
Thanks
The Day You Came Along
I Guess It Had To Be That Way
Black Moonlight

Vol. 3 CIN 011
Bing Crosby In Hollywood 1933-1934
GOING HOLLYWOOD 1933
Just An Echo In The Valley
Beautiful Girl
After Sundown
We'll Make Hay While The Sun Shines
Temptation
Our Big Love Scene
WE'RE NOT DRESSING 1934
Love Thy Neighbour
Once In A Blue Moon
Goodnight Lovely Little Lady
May I
She Reminds Me Of You
SHE LOVES ME NOT 1934
I'm Hummin' I'm Whistlin' I'm Singin'
Love In Bloom
Straight From The Shoulder

Derek Parkes has sent me three excellent CDs from overseas with quite a bit of material new to CD. The first is the third release in the "Harry Lillis" series. This one "On Stage" is taken from Bing's concerts in Nysen, Norway, and London, England.

Harry Lillis "On Stage" HLYCD-003 £11.00



Feels Good, Feels Right
Medley Of Hits (33.03 minutes)
I Surrender Dear
Swinging On A Star
Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams
Dear Hearts And Gentle People
True Love
Don't Fence Me In
Pennies From Heaven
Blue Hawaii
Sweet Leilani
Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral
Just One More Chance

Sail Away From Norway
Oh Look At Me Now/I Love Piano (piano)

Now You Has Jazz
(previously unissued)
Them There Eyes
Moonlight Becomes You
You Are My Sunshine
I'll Be Seeing You
Basin Street
Accentuate The Positive
Please
Baby Face
South Of The Border
Galway Bay
Play A Simple Melody w. Harry Crosby

<<<< end of medley >>>>
George Gershwin Medley (piano)
Everything Old Is New Again

Hallelujah (piano)

Gone Fishin' w. Harry Crosby
San Fernando Valley
I Found A Million Dollar Baby
San Antonio Rose
I'm An Old Cowhand
In A Little Spanish Town
Wait Till The Sun Shines, Nellie
It's Easy To Remember
It's Been A Long, Long Time
Blue Skies
White Christmas
Ol' Man River

My Cup Runneth Over
The Way We Were
Cuando Calienta El Sol

Noel Coward Medley:
I'll Follow My Secret Heart
Some Day I'll Find You
Zigeuner
There's Nothing I Haven't Sung About
Don't Put your Daughter On The Stage, Mrs Worthington
Mad About The Boy
Mad Dogs And Englishmen
I'll See You Again
London Pride
<<<< end of medley >>>>

The second CD is from Radio Broadcasts featuring Bing and Buddy Cole. As the material is also new to CD and the quality is quite good, it made a nice addition to my collection.

Bing on Radio with Buddy Cole--Vol. 2 BCR 02 £9.50

Too Marvellous For Words
Get Me To The Church On Time
Don't Get Around Anymore
Lullaby Of Broadway
Almost Like Being In Love
How About You?
I Feel A Song Coming On
Flores Negras (You're The Moment Of A Lifetime
How Am I To Know?
Thou Swell
My Blue Heaven
With All My Heart
I Can't Believe Tha You're In Love With Me
Keep It Gay
Then I'll Be Happy
Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea
Ford Advert
You Do Something To Me
Ford Advert

It Happened In Monterey
All The Way
You're Driving Me Crazy
You Took Advantage Of Me
Tha Old Black Magic
Thank Heaven For Little Girls
Rain
Arrivederci Roma
Oh, Look At Me Now
This Ole House
How Important Can It Be?
Taking A Chance On Love
That's All I Want From You
A Man Chases A Girl
That's The Way Love Goes
Mr Sandman (w. Lindsay Crosby)
Scarlet Ribbons
Moonlight Becomes You

The third CD is a 1996 two-disc 39-track compilation of many of Bing's hit recordings by Starts Entertainment Ltd., London. The title "Swinging on a Star" has been used about 6 or 8 times in the past, and I believe all of the 39 tracks have appeared on CD before. However, the quality is good and selection of tracks attractive.

Bing Crosby Swinging on a Star MUCD 9515 ??

Disc One:
1. (There'll Be Bluebirds Over) The White Cliffs Of Dover
2. Yankee Doodle Dandy
3. I Don't Want To Talk Without You, Baby
4. You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To
5. It's All Over Now
6. As Time Goes By
7. I'll Be Seeing You
8. Shoo-Shoo-Baby
9. Long Ago (And Far Away)
10. Bless'em All
11. I'll Get By (As Long As I Have You)
12. Is You Is, Or Is You Ain't? (My Baby)
13. Saturday Night (Is The Loneliest Night Of The Week)
14. Wait For Me Mary
15. It's Always You
16. Basin Street Blues
17. You Belong To My Heart
18. Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ra (That's An Irish Lullaby)
19. Swingin' On A Star
20. Trade Winds

Disc Two:
1. New San Antonio Rose
2. Dinah
3. I Love You
4. Sweet Georgia Brown
5. You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me
6. Temptation
7. Too Marvellous For Words
8. May I?
9. June In January
10. With Every Breath I Take
11. I'm An Old Cowhand (From The Rio Grande)
12. Pennies From Heaven
13. Mr. Gallagher And Mr. Shean
14. You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby
15. Sunday, Monday Or Always
16. Sierra Sue
17. Deep In The Heart Of Texas
18. I'll Be Home For Christmas
19. White Christmas

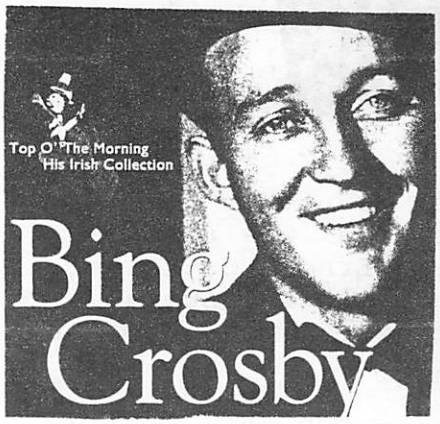
T.P.L. 107:50

MUCD9515

While I really appreciate the help from our overseas friends, we do find a few in the USA with help from our club members--and a bit of shoe leather with regular visits to several major record stores in the L.A. area. In the past 6 or 8 weeks, four discs of interest have been located.

The most interesting--Bing Crosby "Top O' the Morning/His Irish Collection"--from MCA-Decca with a big assist from member Wig Wiggins, American Representative, International Crosby Circle. Wig not only wrote the liner notes, but also was instrumental in convincing MCA to produce the disc.

Bing Crosby Top O' the Morning/
His Irish Collection MCAD 11406 $11.99



TOP O' THE MORNING/HIS IRISH COLLECTION

1. WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING 2. MACNAMARA'S BAND 3. GALWAY BAY 4. TOP O' THE MORNING 5. ROSALEEN 6. HOW CAN YOU BUY KILLARNEY? 7. IT S THE SAME OLD SHILLELAGH 8. TOO-RA-LOO-RA-LOO-RAL (THAT'S AN IRISH LULLABY) (FIRST VERSION) 9. THE ROSE OF TRALEE 10. DEAR OLD DONEGAL 11. DANNY BOY 12. ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE 13. I'LL TAKE YOU HOME AGAIN, KATHLEEN 14. THE DONOVANS 15. WHERE THE RIVER SHANNON FLOWS 16. EILEEN 17. WITH MY SHILLELAGH UNDER MY ARM 18. MY GIRL'S AN IRISH GIRL 19. THAT TUMBLEDOWN SHACK IN ATHLONE 20. TWO SHILLELAGH O'SULLIVAN 21. THE ISLE OF INNISFREE 22. WHO THREW THE OVERALLS IN MRS. MURPHY'S CHOWDER? 23. DID YOUR MOTHER COME FROM IRELAND? 24. TOO-RA-LOO-RA-LOO-RAL (THAT'S AN IRISH LULLABY)

This is the most complete collection yet of Bing Crosby's heralded Irish recordings, including several that have not been available for years and both released versions of his classic "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral." Over 70 minutes of the sweetest music this side of heaven.

The next disc, located at Tower Records, is an import from Italy--"Bing Crosby, Greatest Hits on Radio Vol. I." The cover on this album is very similar in appearance to the sleeve on "Bing Crosby on Radio in the Thirties" listed later in this report. However, the tracks on this disc are commercial recordings with the tracks on "The Thirties" disc from actual radio broadcasts. While the sound is good, most of the tracks have been issued many times. There are a few exceptions, such as "Sailor Beware" and "I Wished on the Moon," that you may have missed. However, I must assure you that Track 13 listed as "I Am an Old Cowman" is not a new just-discovered recording by Bing!

Bing Crosby Greatest Hits on Radio--Vol. I SIAE-RY32 $15.99

THE RADIO YEARS

BING CROSBY

Greatest Hits on Radio Vol. 1
The Mythical Studio Recordings (1931-1938)

1. OUT OF NOWHERE (E.Heyman-J.Green) Recording - 30 March 1931
2. JUST ONE MORE CHANCE (S.Coslow-A.Johnston) Recording - 4 April 1931
3. STARDUST (M.Parish-H.Carmichael) Recording - 19 August 1931
4. WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT (R.Turk-B.Crosby-F.E.Ahlert) Recording - 23 November 1931
5. THE MOON WAS YELLOW (F.Lewis-F.E.Ahlert) Recording - 5 October 1934
6. LOVE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER (L.Robin-L.Jenkins) Recording - 9 November 1934
7. SOON (R.Rodgers-L.Hart) Recording - 21 February 1935
8. JUNE IN JANUARY (L.Robin-R.Rainger) Recording - 21 February 1935
9. IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER (R.Rodgers-L.Hart) Recording - 21 February 1935
10. WITHOUT A WORD OF WARNING (M.Gordon-H.Revel) Recording - 14 August 1935
11. I WISHED ON THE MOON (R.Rainger-D.Parker) Recording - 13 November 1935
12. SAILOR BEWARE (L.Robin-R.A.Whiting) Recording - 13 November 1935
13. I AM AN OLD COWMAN (J.Mercer) Recording - 17 July 1936
14. PENNIES FROM HEAVEN (J.Burke-A.Johnston) Recording - 24 July 1936
15. ME AND THE MOON (W.Hirsch-L.Handman) Recording - 7 August 1936
16. SWEET LEILANI (H.Owens) Recording - 27 February 1937
17. TOO MARVELOUS FOR WORDS (J.Mercer-R.A.Whiting) Recording - 3 March 1937
18. THE MOON GOT IN MY EYES (J.Burke-A.Johnston) Recording - 12 July 1937
19. REMEMBER ME ? (A.Dubin-H.Warren) Recording - 20 September 1937
20. BOB WHITE (J.Mercer-B.Hanighen) Recording - 25 September 1937
21. IT'S THE NATURAL THING TO DO (J.Burke-A.Johnston) Recording - 21 January 1938
22. ON THE SENTIMENTAL SIDE (J.V.Monaco-J.Burke) Recording - 21 January 1938
23. ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BANDS (I.Berlin) Recording - 26 January 1938

Laser Light (Delta Music Co.) has decided to produce a series of albums based on the "American Legends" postage stamps issued by the U.S.P.O. While there is nothing new to CD on the Bing disc, it is a pleasant collection--and the price is certainly right!

Bing Crosby American Legends Laserlight 12-732 $5.99

The final disc, also located at Tower Records, is not by Bing, but is about Bing. Rosemary Clooney "Rosie Sings Bing" was released as an L.P. in 1978, and many members--including Ernest Sutkowski and Hobie Wilson--have urged Concord Jazz, Inc., to reissue as a CD. The result is a nice tribute to Bing from one of his closest friends--and a great vocalist.

Rosemary Clooney Rosie Sings Bing Concord Jazz CCD-4060 $11.99

George O'Reilly of Dublin, Ireland, a long-time friend and fan of Bing, produced a TV show "A Little Bit of Irish" starring Bing in Dublin in 1966. In 1993, George released a CD of the songs featured in the TV show. He has now produced a cassette of the radio broadcast of 1/29/47--"Road to Hollywood"--starring Bing, Bob Hope, and Dorothy Lamour, and the radio version of "Holiday Inn" with Bing and Dinah Shore. George has made arrangements with Wig Wiggins to supply a number of these cassettes for interested American fans. If interested, write Wig at 5608 No. 34th Steet, Arlington, VA 22207--or call (703) 241-5608.

CASSETTE
Road To Hollywood - Bing, Bob Hope & Dorothy Lamour **Golden Memories GMAC 102**
Holiday Inn - Bing with Dinah Shore

Side A
My Heart Goes Crazy -Bing
The Road To Hollywood Sketch
Put It There Pal w Bob Hope
Tumbling Tumbleweeds - Bing
Sweet Violets w Bob Hope
Road To Morocco w Bob Hope & Dorothy Lamour
Have I Told You Lately That I Love You (w. Hope)

Side B
I'll Capture Her Heart w Fred Astaire
Lazy - Bing
White Christmas w Dinah Shore
Let's Start The New Year Right
Happy Holiday w Dinah Shore
Be Careful It's My Heart - Bing
Easter Parade w Dinah Shore
White Christmas w Dinah Shore

BING sings

Jim Reilly, Record Editor of "Bing"--the International Crosby Circle publication, has alerted me to three new releases. He indicates that, while there are many "repeats" of previously-released material, the quality is good and the CDs are worth considering. Many thanks, Jim. I haven't found any of them in the U.S. as yet, but they are probably available from Footlight Records in N.Y.; The Record Centre in England; or through Derek Parkes Record Club in England.

Bing Crosby On Radio In The Thirties — **S.I.A.E. RY 18** — Italy

Original Broadcasts From 1937 to 1938

Hello Hawaii
Flat Foot Floogie w Bob Burns
Lovelight In The Starlight
Silver On The Sage
Someone Else May Be There While I'm Gone
Naturally
You Got To Start Off Each Day With A Song w Jimmy Durante
I Can Dream Can't I w The Andrews Sisters
On Top Of Old Smokey w Burl Ives
Hours Of Love w George Burns
Louise/Mimi w Maurice Chevalier
That Old Gang Of Mine
If I New You Were Coming w Bob Hope
For Me And My Gal w Judy Garland

A Bold Fisherman w H Bogart & Lauren Bacall
Up A Lazy River/Paper Doll w The Mills Bros.
Cuanto Le Gusta w Peggy Lee
May The Good Lord Bless And Keep You w Nat King Cole & The Andrews Sisters
Can I Forget You
I Still Love To Kiss You Goodnight
When You Dream About Hawaii
If It's The Last Thing I Do
Once In A While
The Lonesome Road / Sweet Stranger (shown as separate tracks on sleeve)
Swingin' Down The Lane
She's Tall She's Tan She's Terrific
Once In A While (not shown on sleeve)

King Bing — **Hallmark 300222** — UK

20 Golden Favourites From The King Of The Crooners

You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me
Dinah
Temptation
With Every Breath I Take
May I
Sweet Georgia Brown
June In January
Sunday Monday Or Always
I Love You
New San Antonio Rose

Mr Gallagher And Mr Shean
I'm An Old Cowhand
Deep In The Heart Of Texas
Sierra Sue
You Must Have Bee A Beautiful Baby
Swinging On A Star
Trade Winds
Moonlight Becomes You
Too Marvellous For Words
Pennies From Heaven

Bing Crosby The Magic Collection — **ARC Records MEC 949001** — Holland

Where The Blue Of The Night
I Found A Million Dollar Baby
Now That You Are Gone
At Your Command
Dancing In The Dark
Too Late
Sweet And Lovely
A Faded Summer Love
Just One More Chance

I'm Through With Love
Out Of Nowhere
Stardust
Goodnight Sweetheart
I Apologise
Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams
Just A Gigolo
I Surrender Dear
If You Should Ever Need Me

'Lost' Bing Crosby Film To Be Restored

A 1930 Bing Crosby short subject, thought to have been lost, has been located in Portland, Oregon. The film, *Two Plus Fours*, will be restored by the UCLA Film Archive under a grant from Hugh Hefner.

The film was produced by Pathé studios and released as a musical comedy short in August, 1930. After its initial release, the film disappeared until a few years ago when a 16mm version, along with two sound discs, was discovered in Portland. Since the early 35mm nitrate prints have most likely deteriorated, the 16mm version was particularly unique in that the acetate film base remained stable and in excellent condition. This version, with separate sound discs, was most likely used for the experimental non-theatrical market at the time.

Portlanders Gary Lacher and Rudy Zvarich located the film and after some quick research with film historians and Crosby fans, it became clear the short was a rare find. The film includes singers Al Rinker and Harry Barris, who along with Bing, appear in the film. They were all known collectively as the Rhythm Boys.

Two Plus Fours came with a group of over 30 other early Pathé sound shorts (1928-1930), many of which were thought to have been lost. They will be preserved at a later date. Meanwhile, the Crosby film will have a high priority for preservation and will be planned for a showing this summer.

For further information, call Gary Lacher at (503) 233-5861.

(From a press release by Gary Lacher Productions, which plans to release this film on video.)

The final item in this issue is "We're Just Wild About Harry" by "The Boss"--Bing Crosby. In an effort to help club members acquire this excellent collection, Bob Lundberg purchased a number of the CDs from England. There are five copies left, and Joyce Lundberg has asked me to make them available to club members. The cost is $15.00, which includes packing and shipping, on a "first come, first served" basis. I assure you that this is a most enjoyable CD. My address is below.

BING CROSBY - "We're Just Wild About Harry"

		Timing
1	IT'S ONLY A PAPER MOON *(Arlen; Rose; Harburg)* 24/2/44	3:10
2	YOU BROUGHT A NEW KIND OF LOVE TO ME *(Kahal; Norman; Fain)* 20/1/44	3:08
3	CANDLE LIGHT AND WINE *(Evans)* 13/1/44	2:39
4	EASTER PARADE *(Berlin)* 6/4/44	4:52
5	NEVADA *(Green; Donaldson)* 19/8/43	2:34
6	PUT YOUR ARMS AROUND ME HONEY *(McRee; Von Tilzer)* 16/9/43	2:11
7	AS TIME GOES BY *(Hupfield)* 28/1/43	2:38
8	MY IDEAL *(Robin; Whiting; Chase)* 6/1/44	2:09
9	AFTER YOU'VE GONE *(Creamer; Layton)* 17/12/44	3:10
10	AFTER AWHILE *(Drake; Shirl)* 22/3/45	3:26
11	I'M MAKING BELIEVE *(Gordon; Monaco)* 1/2/45	2:55
12	CUDDLE UP A LITTLE CLOSER *(Carl Hochna)* 29/3/43	2:06
13	MOONLIGHT BAY *(Wenrock; Madden)* 30/3/44	3:08
14	SIDE BY SIDE *(Woods)* 20/7/44	3:08
15	CAN'T YOU TELL *(Cahn; Styne)* 29/5/41	1:55
16	IT WAS WONDERFUL THEN *(Benaysky)* 29/5/41	2:30
17	ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT *(Trad)* 29/5/41	2:03
18	MARIA ELENA *(Russel; Barcelata)* 29/5/41	2:12
19	SOMEONE ELSE MAY BE THERE WHILE I'M GONE *(Berlin)* 21/7/38	1:24
20	AT LONG LAST LOVE *(O'Keefe; Dolan)* 10/11/38	2:20
21	I'M BUILDING A SAILBOAT OF DREAMS *(Friend; Franklin)* 13/4/39	1:08
22	I'M JUST WILD ABOUT HARRY *(Sissle; Blake)* 5/1/39	1:29

In addition to the compact discs, Joyce has sent me Bob's sheet music collection. The 70-piece collection is available at $5.00 a copy, which includes postage and shipping. If you are interested, send me a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a list of the available songs.

BOOKS

The Decca Labels

A Discography (6 volumes)

Compiled by **Michel Ruppli**, *Discographer*

Discographies, No. 63

Greenwood Press. 1996. 0-313-27370-7. 6106 pages. 6 volumes $595.00

This six-volume discography lists full available details (dates, titles, personnel) on all recording sessions made between 1934 and 1973 by the Decca label, as well as its subsidiary labels, Brunswick, Coral, and Vocalion. Material from other sources (Brunswick recordings of the 1920s and the Signature label, for example) reissued by Decca are covered. Included in the discography are details on most of the big bands of the pre-war era (Count Basie, Fletcher Henderson, Jimmy Dorsey, Woody Herman, Jimmy Lunceford, Chick Webb) as well as such jazz stars as Louis Armstrong and Art Tatum and such singers as Ella Fitzgerald and Peggy Lee. In addition, Guy Lombardo's dance band, great pop stars like Bing Crosby and Judy Garland, and legendary vocal groups like the Andrews Sisters and the Mills Brothers are covered. Country hit makers such as Jimmy Davis and the Sons of the Pioneers are detailed as well.

Each volume contains an index of artists, with the last volume providing numerical listings of issued recordings, including sections on 78/45 rpm singles, 45 rpm extended plays, 33 rpm albums, and compact discs. This Decca set is essential to all collectors and music libraries concentrating on the era, the key artists, and groups of the period.

CONTENTS: Volume 1 - The California Sessions; The Los Angeles Sessions; The San Francisco Sessions; Appendix 1: Al Jolson Broadcasts; Appendix 2: Bing Crosby Broadcasts; Appendix 3: Additional California Recordings; Appendix 4: World Transcriptions; Index of Artists. Volume 2 - The Eastern and Southern Sessions (1934-1942); Part 1: The Chicago Sessions; Part 2: The New York Sessions (1934-1942); Part 3: The Southern Sessions (1934-1941); Part 4: The Caribbean Sessions (1935-1940); Part 5: Reissues from Other Labels; Additional Sessions Issued by Decca; Index of Artists. Volume 3 - The Eastern Sessions (1943-1956); Part 1: The Decca/Coral Sessions; Part 2: Signature Label; Part 3: World Transcriptions; Part 4: Other Transcriptions; Index of Artists. Volume 4 - The Eastern Sessions (1956-1973); The New York Popular Sessions (1956-1973); Additional Players; Additional Poems and Readings; Additional Recordings; from Film Soundtracks; Additional Recordings Issued by Decca; Index of Artists. Volume 5 - Country Recordings, Classical Recordings and Reissues; Part 1: Country Sessions (1946-1973); Part 2: Classical Recordings; Part 3: Reissues from Foreign Recordings; Composer Index; Index of Artists. Volume 6 - Numerical Listings and General Artist Index; Part 1: Single Numerical Listings; Part 2: Album Numerical Listings; Part 3: Composer Index; Part 4: General Artist Index.

Charlie

Charles Baillie
BINGsings Editor
118 W. Las Flores Ave.
Arcadia, CA. 91007

Only the well-heeled can afford this set. Maybe you can talk your local library into ordering it. Looks interesting!

You can order it from Greenwood Publishing Group, 88 Post Road West, P.O. Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881 (203) 226-3571.

W.L.M.

BITS OF BING

The following CDs have one or more tracks by Bing—for the really dedicated!

Christmas with Louis Armstrong and Friends. BMCD 5001. (Blue Moon Record Co.) 25 tracks, 5 w/Bing: Silver Bells (w/Carol Richards)/White Christmas/Adeste Fidelis/I'll Be Home For Christmas/12 Days of Christmas (w/Andrews Sisters). $15.98.

Christmas with the Stars. Fat Boy Records FAT CD 229. 19 tracks, 3 w/Bing: Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer (w/Ella Fitzgerald)/Oh! Come All Ye Faithful/White Christmas. $12.99.

Songs That Got Us Thru WWII, Vol. 2. Rhino 2-71718. 18 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby. $15.99.

You're The Tops—Cole Porter. Avid AVC 518. 21 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Let's Do It, Let's Fall in Love. $12.99.

Christmas All-Stars. PLIZ 445440-2. 10 tracks, 1 w/Bing: White Christmas. $7.99.

The Andrews Sisters. Living Era CD AJA 5096. 22 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Ciribiribin. $13.99.

Those Wonderful Years: (1) Fever. JCD 7003. 14 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Play A Simple Melody (w/Gary Crosby). **(2) Happy Days Are Here Again.** JCD 7005. 14 tracks, 2 w/Bing: Alexander's Rag Time Band/Bob White (w/C. Boswell). **(3) Because of You.** JCD 7007. 14 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Out of Nowhere. **(4) Juke Box Saturday Night.** JCD 7009. 14 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Accentuate the Positive (w/Andrews Sisters). **(5) That's Hollywood.** JCD 7011. 14 tracks, 2 with Bing: Swinging on a Star/Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening (w/Jane Wyman). **(6) Puttin' on the Ritz.** JCD 7012. 14 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Sweet Leilani. $11.99 per disc.

More Radio Fun. Conifer CD-HD-240. 23 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Bob White (w/C. Boswell). $11.99.

Joe Franklin Presents—Hurray For Hollywood. Legacy JK 64641. 12 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Please. $8.99.

The 1930's—The Jazz Singers. Columbia CK 40847. 17 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Dinah (w/Mills Bros.). $11.99.

Happy Holidays—Warm and Wonderful Christmas Favorites. CD CAP 89587. 12 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow. $12.98.

Let It Snow. CD CAP 99692. 18 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Winter Wonderland. $12.98.

Santamental Journey. CD-RHI-72175. 16 tracks, 1 w/Bing: White Christmas. $10.98.

The Mills Brothers. CD-JSP-301. 21 tracks, 2 w/Bing: Dinah/Shine. $18.98.

That's Entertainment—The Ultimate Anthology of MGM Musicals. 6 CD set. CD-RHI-72182. 128 tracks, 2 w/Bing: Going Hollywood/Temptation. $96.96.

Sinatra 80th—All The Best. 2 CD set. CD-CAP-35952. 40 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Well Did You Evah? (w/Frank). $29.98.

The Time-Life Treasury of Christmas. 2 CD set. OAJST9. 50 tracks, 1 w/Bing: White Christmas. $29.99.

Great Romantic Memories of the War Years. Readers Digest 4 CD set. CD-219C. 80 tracks, 7 w/Bing: A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square/Skylark/White Christmas/ It's Been a Long, Long Time/Now Is the Hour/The Moon of Manakoora/I'll Be Home for Christmas. $54.96.

The Coolest Christmas. Oglio Records OGL-81570. 14 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Peace on Earth/Little Drummer Boy (w/David Bowie). $14.98.

The Edge of Christmas. Oglio Records OGL-81585. 12 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Peace on Earth/Little Drummer Boy (w/David Bowie). $14.98.

Songs and Sounds of World War II. Special Music SCD 5176. 11 song tracks, 1 w/Bing: Bless 'em All. Also various WWII news flashes. $7.99.

The Great Old Time Radio Stars. Sony Special Products A 10266. 10 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Sweet Georgia Brown. $6.99.

Great Gentlemen of Song—Pennies from Heaven, Vol. 2. Capitol CDP 7243-8-31775-2-3. 20 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Now You Has Jazz. $11.99.

Don't Ask for the Moon, We Have the Stars. Conifer UCD-400. 26 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Only Forever. $13.99.

24 All-Time Greats. Empress RAJCD-831. 24 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Can't Get Indiana Off My Mind. $12.99.

D-Day, A Commemoration in Sound—War Years. 5 discs. Conifer DDCD-6644. Contains unknown Bing songs. $54.99.

The Flapper Set—WWII. 5 discs, 3 tracks w/Bing: Disc 4, **The Great Vocalists,** Past CD 7018, Blue of the Night/Moonlight Becomes You; Disc 5, **Into the 40's,** Past 7019, White Christmas. $53.99.

Great American Songwriters, Vol. 1-5. Rhino R2-72033. Vol. 1, **Gershwin,** 20 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Somebody Loves Me. Vol. 2, **Mercer,** 20 tracks, 1 w/Bing: In The Cool, Cool Cool of the Evening (w/Jane Wyman). Vol. 3, **Rodgers & Hart,** 20 tracks, none with Bing. Vol. 4, **Berlin,** 20 tracks, 1 w/Bing: White Christmas. Vol. 5, **Ellington & Strayhorn,** 20 tracks, none with Bing. $78.99.

Popular Melodies That Will Live Forever. Readers Digest, 4 CDS. 80 tracks, at least 1 w/Bing: Anniversary Song (List incomplete). $54.96.

I've Got Rhythm—The Music of George Gershwin. Smithsonian Institute, 4 CDs. 60+ tracks, at least 1 w/Bing: Mine (w/Judy Garland) (List incomplete) $54.96.

Songs That Won The War. Laser Light: (1) **Rosie the Riveter,** #12449. 12 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Swinging on a Star. (2) **The Home Front,** #12494. 12 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Buy, Buy, Buy Bonds. (3) **Something to Remember You By,** #12500. 12 tracks, 1 w/Bing: I'll Be Home for Christmas. $7.99 per disc.

Big Band Jazz. Smithsonian Institute Collections. 4 CDs. 80 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Changes (w/Paul Whiteman). $54.96.

The Envelope Please—Oscar Winning Hits Since 1934. The Beautiful Music Co #EVD. 5 CDs. 60 tracks, 4 w/Bing: Sweet Leilani/White Christmas/Swinging on a Star/In The Cool, Cool Cool of the Evening. $49.98.

20's and 30's Hits—Billboard Chart Hits. The Beautiful Music Co #TAD. 2 CDs. 20 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Pennies from Heaven. $19.98.

Joe Bushkin—The Road to Oslo and Play It Again, Joe. CD-DRG 8490. 20 tracks, 2 w/Bing: Now You Has Jazz/Sail Away from Norway. $15.98.

This Is My Country. Readers Digest. 4CDs. 88 tracks, at least 1 w/Bing: (There'll Be a) Hot Time in the Town of Berlin (w/Andrews Sisters) (List incomplete). $54.96.

Let a Song Be Your Umbrella. The Beautiful Music Co. #UND. 2 CDs. 50 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Swinging on a Star. $24.98.

Big Band Singers. Good Music Co. 143826. 2 CDs. 40 tracks, 1 w/Bing: You're Getting To Be a Habit with Me (w/Guy Lombardo). $24.95.

Sweet Potato Tooters. Good Music Co. 143529. 24 tracks, 3 w/Bing: El Rancho Grande/When the Bloom Is on the Sage/Sweet Potato Piper. $16.98.

Tenderly. Good Music Co. 143123. 20 tracks, 3 w/Bing: Ciribiribin (w/Andrews Sisters)/Symphony/The Poor People of Paris (w/Rosemary Clooney). $16.98.

Smithsonian American Songbook Series: (1) **E. Y. Harburg.** ADO48-16 A24152. 23 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Brother Can You Spare a Dime. (2) **Frank Loesser.** ADO48-15 A24153. 22 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Tallahassee (w/Andrews Sisters). (3) **Dorothy Fields.** ADO48-13 A24150. 22 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Close as Pages in a Book. (4) **Kurt Weill.** ADO48-17 A24154. 20 tracks, 1 w/Bing: September Song. $18.98 per disc.

The First Crooners—Vol. 2. Take Two Records TT 418. 19 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Boo Boo Boo (from "Too Much Harmony") $15.98.

Hollywood Hit Parade. Time-Life M/HHP-196-00. 2 CDs. 40 tracks, 1 w/Bing: I'll Be Seeing You. $26.99.

The Andrews Sisters—Their Greatest Hits and Finest Performances. Readers Digest #03 1906. 3 CDs. 60 tracks, at least 1 w/Bing: Don't Fence Me In (List incomplete). $42.96.

A Celebration of Country 'n' Pop Music. Readers Digest #B-R 6650-1. 4 CDs. 83 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Bouquet of Roses. $54.96.

Xavier Cugat "Me Gusta La Conga." Saludos Amigos CD-62009-AAD. 18 tracks, 1 w/Bing: Siboney.

BING ON VIDEO

In "BINGANG" winter 1995-96 (Pg. 48 & 49), Editor Wayne gave you the news on Festival Films first three releases of rare Bing films from the collection of Bob DeFlores, film archivist. These videos were excellent, and Ron Hall of Festival Films tells me the fourth video--Bing at Sennett Vol. 2--should be available when you receive this issue of BINGANG.*

This video contains the last three of the six comedy shorts Bing made for Mack Sennett, and includes "One More Chance" which was previously unavailable. As indicated, you can order this release for $24.95 (postpaid in the USA) by mail or phone at 1-800-798-6083. Ron Hall will be happy to take your order.

BING at Sennett Vol. 2

Excellent quality video containing Bing Crosby's other three Mack Sennett musical-comedy shorts. From the Bob DeFlores collection. Recorded at standard play speed.

$24.95

(Postpaid in USA)

VISA, Mastercard or personal checks

I SURRENDER DEAR

(Released Sep. 13, 1931)

ONE MORE CHANCE

(Released Nov. 15, 1931)

SING, BING, SING

(Released March 24, 1933)

*This tape is now available and can be ordered from Festival Films, 6115 Chestnut Terrace, Shorewood, MN 55331; phone or fax 800-798-6083 or 612-470-2172. Your editor has seen the tape, and it is of the quality we have come to expect of Festival Films. Their next video will definitely contain Bing's 1933 Paramount short PLEASE, plus other rareties from the Bob DeFlores collection. They are planning to tell Bing's life story up to 1934. Included will be his appearances in "Hollywood on Parade," "Reaching for the Moon," "Check and Double Check," home movies, trailers, newsreel footage and more. Sounds wonderful! W.L.M.

SWAPS AND SUCH

WANTED: I'm looking for good VHS video copies of the Bing Crosby TV show that Nostalgia showed last year. Is there anybody willing and able to get me (good) video copies of any other Crosby TV show (or guest appearance)? Please do get in touch with me. Etty Gits, Hobokenstraat 559, 4826 EJ Breda, Netherlands.

WANTED: Nostalgia Channel Crosby specials on VHS. Will pay reasonable price for *first generation* (direct from TV) recordings of each of the 1959-62 Bing shows for my collection. Write Jon Oye, 5831 N. Central, Chicago, IL 60646.

FOR SALE: Complete Bing Crosby LP collection consisting of over 200 albums. Please send $1.00 for list or send your want list. Have most of Bing's Hollywood series, Jonzo, Spokane, etc. Also have other popular singers' LPs for sale (Dino, Perry, Jolie, etc.) Richard Pearson, 2307 N. Trenton St., Arlington, VA 22207.

WANTED: 45 disc or tape of "If I Could Sing Like Bing" by Dean Martin. Dennis Nale, 3335 Latham Drive, Dallas, TX 75229-3847.

NEED HELP with hard-to-find Bing Crosby items? I own a record and CD business specializing in vocals and shows and would like to help you. Michael Mascioli, 530 14th St., #9, San Francisco, CA 94103 [phone (415) 864-8222; fax (415) 864-7222].

WANTED: Bing 16" transcriptions including Philco Radio Time, Armed Forces Radio Service, and Kraft Music Hall. Also V-Discs and Decca vinyl 10" 78s made for radio stations. Murray Kent, 2310 E. Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402.

WANTED: Do you want a loving home for your Bing 78s, 45s, LPs, CDs, books? I am a collector and radio host, especially looking for Australian LPs, unusual items, 10" LPs and 78s. Also interested in many other classic pop/jazz singers. Please call or write Kevin Roberts, 17 Willow Ave., Albany NY 12205 (518-869-0556.)

WANTED: Gonzaga University's Special Collections Department needs certain issues of the Bing Crosby fan publications. If you would like to donate your old journals, write to: Stephanie Edwards, Special Collections Librarian, Gonzaga University, Foley Center, Spokane, WA 99258-0001. Phone: (509) 328-4220. Send a list of what you have by date of issue.

SOME BACK ISSUES of *Bingang* from 1988 to present year are available. They are $2.50 each, including third-class postage. If you are interested, write to the editor at 435 So. Holmes Ave., Kirkwood, MO 63122.

ADS ON THIS PAGE ARE FREE TO MEMBERS OF CLUB CROSBY WHO HAVE ITEMS TO BUY, SELL, OR TRADE.

NEW PAPERBACK BOOK ON BING CROSBY: *Bing Crosby in the 30's.* Edited by G. D. Hamann (Filming Today Press, 1996, 200 p.) Newspaper coverage from California publications. Special price $20 PP from F. B. Wiggins, 5608 N. 34th St., Arlington, VA 22207.

FAN CLUBS

OTHER CROSBY ORGANIZATIONS

BING'S FRIENDS & COLLECTORS SOCIETY
236 Andrieux St.
Sonoma, CA 95476

Editor's Note: Hobie Wilson, president and editor of this organization, has been ill and unable to get out his newsletters. However, he plans to resume publication somewhere around the end of the year. We wish him a complete recovery!

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Prospect Park, PA 19076

INTERNATIONAL SINATRA SOCIETY
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Lakeland, FL 33807-7176

EDDIE CANTOR APPRECIATION SOCIETY
P. O. Box 312
Mount Gay, WV 25637

MILLS BROTHERS SOCIETY
c/o Daniel R. Clemson
604 N. Market Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-2727

DICK HAYMES SOCIETY
c/o Roger L. Dooner
2951 Tyler St., NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

PEGGY LEE FAN CLUB
c/o Ray Richards Allen
250 West 57th St, #1527
New York, NY 10107

PERRY COMO CIRCLE
Martha Gerhard, President
943 Crawford Street
Bethlehem, PA 18017

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FAN CLUBS
P. O. Box 7487
Burbank, CA 91510-7487

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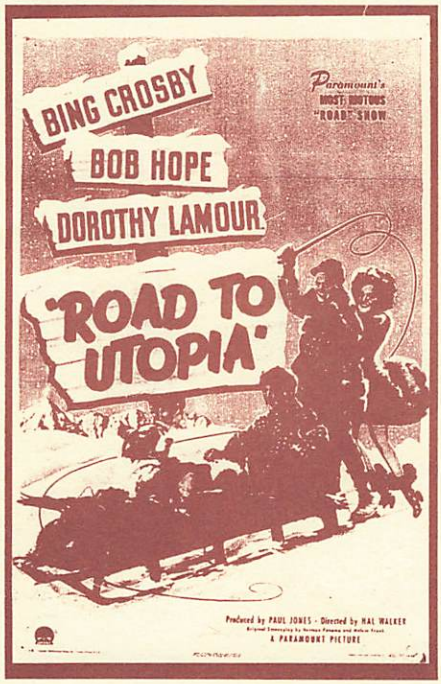

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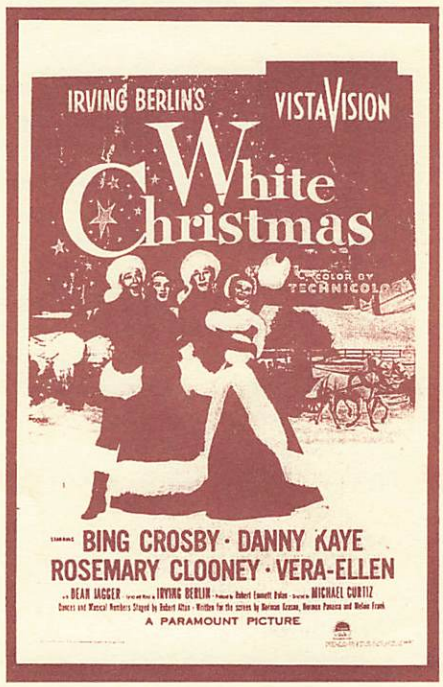

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